

A SPORT PROFILE: THE GIANTS' PHIL SIMMS
WHY THE BUFFALO BILLS WEREN'T FLUKES

NFL:

- MVP & ROOKIE PICKS
- ANALYSIS
- PREDICTIONS

COLLEGE:

- THE TOP 40 TEAMS
- HEISMAN HANDICAP
- COMPLETE SCHEDULES

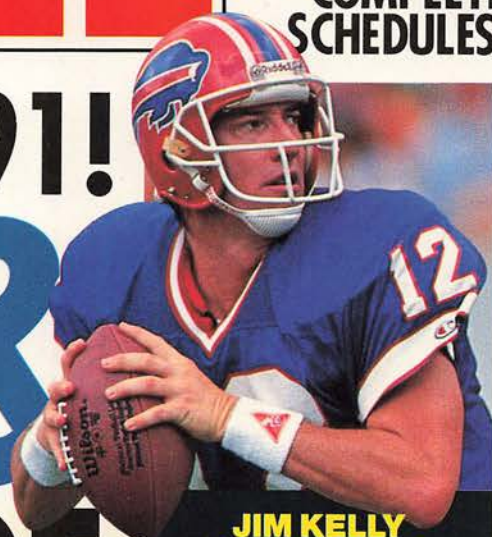
SPORT

FOOTBALL '91!

NFL & COLLEGE PREVIEW



**PHIL SIMMS
& THE GIANTS:**
2nd in the NFC East



**JIM KELLY
& THE BILLS:**
1st in the AFC East



**BLAIR THOMAS
& THE JETS:**
3rd in the AFC East



**IRVING FRYAR
& THE PATRIOTS:**
5th in the AFC East

NFC WEST THE 49ERS ...AGAIN

NFC CENTRAL WHO ELSE BUT THE BEARS?

NFC EAST THE REDSKINS ARE BACK

AFC WEST THE RAIDERS STILL RULE

AFC CENTRAL THE OILERS ARE SLICKEST

AFC EAST THE BILLS ARE BEST

THE SPORT 1991 COLLEGE FOOTBALL TOP 40

- | | | | | |
|------------------|--------------------|--------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| 1. HOUSTON | 9. TENNESSEE | 17. IOWA | 25. BAYLOR | 33. LOUISVILLE |
| 2. WASHINGTON | 10. SYRACUSE | 18. CLEMSON | 26. VIRGINIA TECH | 34. SOUTHERN MISS |
| 3. FLORIDA STATE | 11. MIAMI (FLA.) | 19. UCLA | 27. STANFORD | 35. FRESNO STATE |
| 4. GEORGIA TECH | 12. OKLAHOMA | 20. NEBRASKA | 28. LSU | 36. OREGON |
| 5. MICHIGAN | 13. OHIO STATE | 21. AUBURN | 29. VIRGINIA | 37. NORTH CAROLINA |
| 6. PENN STATE | 14. USC | 22. FLORIDA | 30. TEXAS A&M | 38. MISSISSIPPI |
| 7. NOTRE DAME | 15. MICHIGAN STATE | 23. TEXAS | 31. SAN DIEGO STATE | 39. PITTSBURGH |
| 8. COLORADO | 16. ALABAMA | 24. BYU | 32. CALIFORNIA | 40. N.C. STATE |

SEPTEMBER 1991 \$2.95





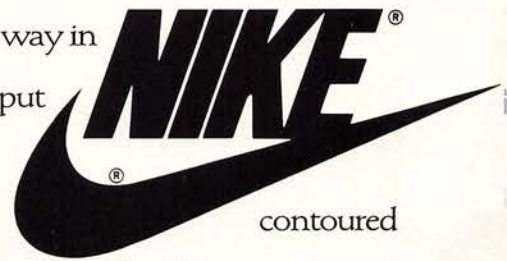
While it's up to you to get your game in shape, we at The Athlete's Foot feel it's up to us to get your feet in the right shoes. Some people need more cushioning. Others more support. So if you're the type who can't wear just any shoe, you shouldn't buy them from just any store. *We have 20 years of experience at this game.* The Athlete's Foot began

as a store for people who take their sport as seriously as we take athletic footwear. And we've never let up. We're the only retailer in the country that has an independent facility that tests shoes. We call it our WearTest Center. Located on the campus of North Central College in Naperville,

THE FIRST THING WE'LL TEACH YOU

Illinois, its evaluations are recognized world-wide. And major shoe manufacturers respect our methods to the point that they often send us prototypes to get feedback. Indeed, no other retailer keeps up with shoe technology like we do. *Nike® just did it. Again.* Nike-Air® technology is legendary. And now they've incorporated Nike-Air® cushioning in a new way in their Air Force 180™. Nike has put Air-Sole® units in the forefoot and rearfoot of their full-length contoured Footframe™ midsole. They've also added the Nike customized Air-Fit™ ankle collar. An on board inflationary device allows you to inflate the ankle collar to conform to your needs for the optimum amount of support and stability. And in sizes seven and up, Nike has put an air bladder under the arch. All in all, Nike's Air Force 180 is a well-cushioned, supportive shoe with excellent traction. *And guess*

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LOS ANGELES: Ralph Panico, Western Advertising Director; 8300 Santa Monica Blvd., Third Floor, Los Angeles, CA 90069, 213/854-2222

NEW YORK: Charlie Alexander, Eastern Advertising Director; Bruce Robert Burton, Director of Marketing/Petersen Magazine Network; 437 Madison Ave., 28th Floor, New York, NY 10022, 212/935-9150

DETROIT: R.E. Brown, Regional Advertising Director; 333 West Fort Street, Suite 1800, Detroit, MI 48226, 313/964-6680

CHICAGO: Duane R. Placko, Western Advertising Director; Petersen Publishing Company, The Petersen Building, 815 North LaSalle Street, Chicago, IL 60610, 312/649-0660

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SPORT

SEPTEMBER 1991

FOOTBALL '91! NFL & COLLEGE PREVIEWS

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SPORT MAIL

THE GREAT DEBATE

I applaud SPORT and Bob Ryan on the article, "The Best NBA Teams Ever" (June). I agree with you 100 percent on your choice of the 1985-86 Boston Celtics of Larry Bird (pictured) as the best ever. It's been a while since I've seen basketball the way they played it.

Jackie Huber
Schenectady, New York

The 1985-86 Celtics the best team ever? They would have been NBA runners-up had Houston not upset Los Angeles in the Western Conference finals. Try the 1982-83 Philadelphia 76ers. They were 35-6 at the season's midpoint and well on their way to a 70-win season before they tailed off (they were probably bored). And what they did in the playoffs will never be equaled.

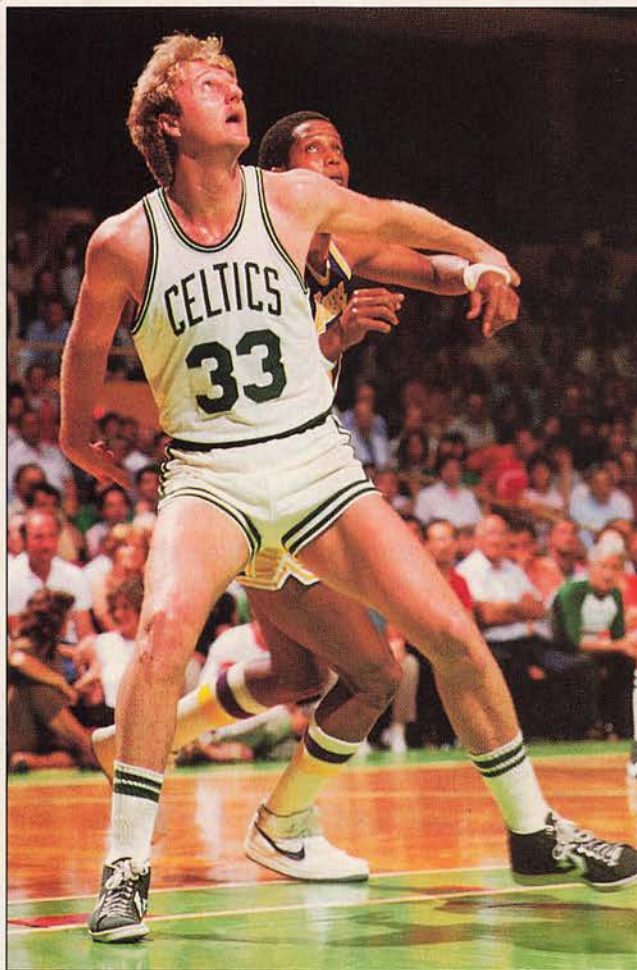
Jim Gregg
Haverhill, Massachusetts

The 1982-83 76ers, who won 12 of 13 playoff games on their way to the championship, placed seventh in the SPORT ratings of all-time NBA teams.

I read with interest Bob Ryan's ranking of the 10 best NBA teams ever. His picking the '85-86 Celtics was a real joke. While their home record of 40-1 was certainly commendable, their road record was 27-14. The 1971-72 Lakers and the 1966-67 Sixers each lost fewer than 14 home and away games combined.

Richard B. Macomber
Glenside, Pennsylvania

Congratulations to Bob Ryan for an 80-percent-accurate article. He included eight great teams, all you need for a single-elimination tournament. But adding the 1976-77 Portland Trail Blazers and the 1969-70 New



ANDREW D. BERNSTEIN/NBA PHOTOS

York Knicks not only spoils the natural tournament number, it also gives us two teams that do not belong with the best. Portland's championship does belong on a list of great playoff upsets, but true greatness should include a great regular season, not Portland's 49-33 second-place finish. As for that Knicks team, clearly Bostonian Ryan is too close to the radiation of the New York media. Mr. Ryan should ignore all the books and wordage of the self-absorbed New Yorkers and consider his own fine analysis of that team's flaws.

Michael Brandt
Columbus, Ohio

Bob "Mr. Celtic" Ryan's article was very good but a little off the mark. Some-

where between No. 10 and No. 4, he forgot to include the best fast-break team of all time—the 1981-82 Lakers.

Dean Roberts
Tustin, California

How the 1971-72 Lakers are not regarded as the all-time best is a total mystery to me. When you say part of your basis for judging was domination over the league during the season, what more could you ask for than 33 straight wins and 69 total victories, each all-time highs? Granted, the Lakers and Celtics teams of the '80s were great, but it would be hard to say that any of them were that much better than the rest of the league the years they won. The 1971-72 Lakers were that much

better than everyone else.

Scott Owen
Bellflower, California

The 1971-72 Lakers were fourth in our rankings.

Mr. Ryan, how could you omit the 1978-79 Seattle SuperSonics?

Robert N. Taber
Mercer Island, Washington

The 1978-79 Sonics, featuring Lonnie Shelton, Dennis Johnson, Jack Sikma and Gus Williams, won the Western Conference's Pacific Division with a 52-30 record in the last season before the three-point shot was adopted, and they went on to beat the Washington Bullets, 4-1, in the NBA finals.

The 1970-71 Milwaukee Bucks belong on anybody's top five. With players such as Lew Alcindor, Oscar Robertson, Lucius Allen and Bob Dandridge, they ended the regular season at 66-16 and breezed through the playoffs, going 12-2, including a four-game sweep of the Baltimore Bullets in the NBA finals. They deserve the recognition.

Chuck Adrian
Antigo, Wisconsin

I was shocked that only two Lakers teams made your top 10 until I realized that Bob Ryan of the *Boston Globe* wrote the article. With that kind of bias, I'm surprised you didn't pick Larry Bird as Athlete of the Decade for the 1980s over Magic Johnson.

Scott A. Breaud
Houston, Texas

Bird finished third on our Athlete-of-the-Decade list, behind Magic and Wayne Gretzky.

Argue with us, applaud us, advise us. Address your letters to SPORT Mail, 8490 Sunset Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90069.

Pull some gees.



It was designed to hug the road with a definite authority. Get a hold of one and think of all the fun you're going to have. The CRX Si. **HONDA**

SPORT TALK

NEWS & NOTES ★ FACTS & FIGURES ★ PLAYERS & PLACES ★ TRIVIA & TRENDS

NOT JUST OLDER, *BETTER*

NFL running backs aren't supposed to get faster at age 32. NFL running backs aren't supposed to be *around* at age 32. But James Brooks is all those things—32, faster and still around.

Brooks, whose 40-yard-dash time this past April at a Bengals minicamp beat his time from last year, is the foremost member of the burgeoning over-30 club. This season, six backs over the age of 30—Brooks, Marcus Allen, Eric Dickerson, Gary Anderson, Ottis Anderson and Mike Rozier—will be the featured halfbacks on their teams. Include back-ups Roger Craig, Albert Bentley and Christian Okoye, and the over-30 back pack reaches nine.

Brooks, who celebrated turning 30 in 1989 by rushing for a career-best 1,239 yards, preaches conditioning. "Once you get in the league, you have to maintain your body," he says.

Brooks dismisses questions about retirement. "It would be crazy," he says. "Who's got the right to say what is 'the age' for playing football?"

—Jeff Weinstock

JOHN McDONOUGH/FOCUS ON SPORTS



McKYER THE McFALCON

We can now reveal why the 49ers failed last year in their bid to threepeat. "The 49ers didn't make a third consecutive Super Bowl appearance, because I wasn't there," says cornerback Tim McKyer, who helped the 49ers win Super Bowls XXIII and XXIV before going to Miami last season.

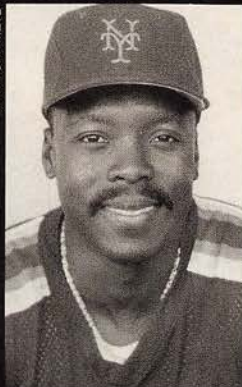
McKyer helped the Dolphins too, he says: "You don't need to be a genius to know I helped improve the Dolphins' defense."

This season, he's found a home in Atlanta, where he'll be playing for Jerry Glanville. About the man in black, McKyer says, "He's the first NFL coach to put his arms around me and say, 'Welcome to the team.'"

—William Ladson

THE ONLY THREE MAJOR-LEAGUE BASEBALL PLAYERS WITH THE MIDDLE NAME "MAURICE"*

NEW YORK METS



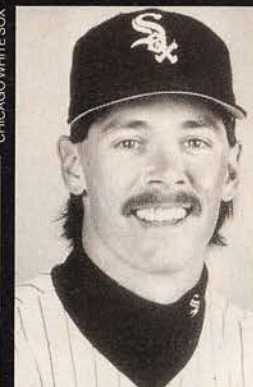
VINCENT MAURICE COLEMAN
Outfielder, New York Mets.

NEW YORK METS



RONALD MAURICE DARLING JR.
Pitcher, New York Mets.

CHICAGO WHITE SOX



WAYNE MAURICE EDWARDS
Pitcher, Chicago White Sox.

*As of opening day, 1991



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AIM HIGH.



SO HOW GOOD IS MICHAEL JORDAN ON THE LINKS ANYWAY?

OK, we know Michael Jordan likes to play golf, and we know he speculates about playing it professionally after he retires from the NBA. But is Jordan any good?

He's pretty good, it seems. But that and a quarter gets you a phone call, not a PGA Tour card. What do his golf partners *really* think? "Right now, Michael only plays the game in the summer months," says Ron Garland, founder of the Golf Nut Society of America. A scratch golfer himself, he's played with Jordan a half-dozen times. "When I first met him, he was a 10 handicap. That was three years ago. He's always improving, and he's improving with the spotlight on him—there's always somebody watching when Michael plays golf. I give him a chance."

Peter Moore was the creative director at Nike responsible for the Air Jordan marketing campaign. An avid golfer, Moore has played with Jordan on a number of occasions. "As far as making it to the Tour goes, I think Michael can do anything he concentrates on," he says. "He's so gifted and has such an ability to concentrate that if he put his mind to it, I think he'd get there. How good he'd be is another question."

Jordan is subject to the same shortcomings as the average weekend duffer, most notably a lack of consistency.

"He hits the ball incredibly long," Garland says. "He hits a 1-iron as long as most good golfers can hit a driver, but he can be very crooked. It's not unusual for him to hit the ball quite a ways off line."

According to Moore, "Michael is the kind of golfer who can make three or four birdies in a row, and then make a seven."

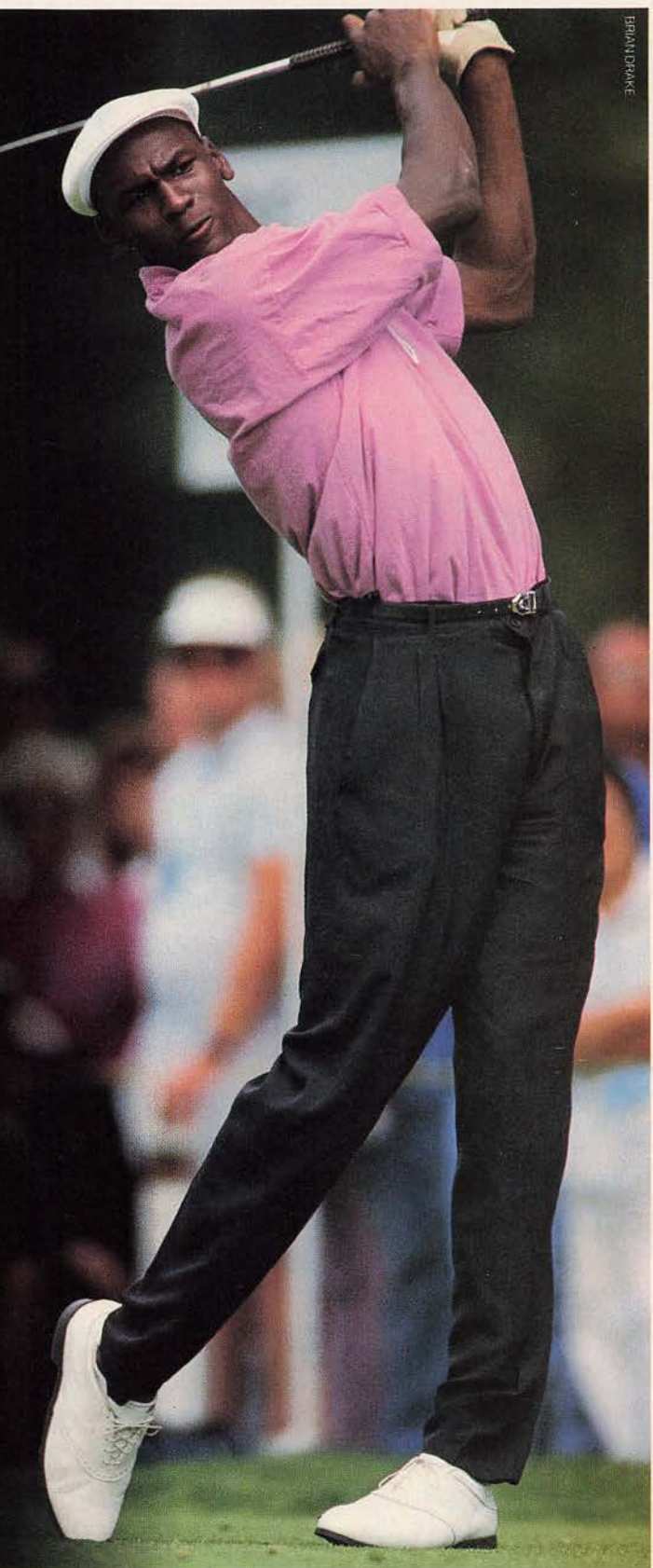
But Moore points out that Jordan will face some unusual obstacles in his quest for a Tour card. "He didn't grow up playing golf," he says. "He'll be older, and you have to take that into account. He's not looking at retirement any time soon, so he'd be entering competition after, say, 10 NBA seasons, and that wears you out."

Jordan has a few advantages, of course, not the least of which is the fact that he would be free of the financial pressures that trouble many PGA Tour rookies. He will also benefit from his innate competitiveness.

"He doesn't like to lose," Moore says. "And you have to remember that Michael has stood on the free-throw line with no time left on the clock and the game at stake in front of 18,000 screaming fans. That's more pressure than you have to face having to sink a three-foot putt for the Masters."

The bottom line? Jordan may have a chance, but that's not saying much. In contrast to what his golf buddies will say for the record, there's the opinion offered anonymously by yet another long-time observer of Jordan and pro golf. "Michael," he says with finality, "will never play on the Tour."

—Patrick Quinn



SPORT TALK



TALE OF THE TAPE

ROB DIBBLE VS. ALBERT BELLE

Just when you thought it was safe to sit down at a baseball game, Rob Dibble heaves the old horsehide grandstandward because he didn't like his own effort, then a few weeks later, Cleveland's Albert Belle chucks the pill directly at a fan because he didn't like his style of razzing. Both tosses plunked spectators: Dibble's by accident; Belle's on purpose. Fellas, don't throw baseballs at paying customers. Throw them at each other. May the best hothead win.

DIBBLE	OPPONENTS	BELLE
27	AGE	24
6-4	HEIGHT	6-2
235	WEIGHT	200
RELIEF PITCHER, CINCINNATI REDS	DAY JOB	OUTFIELDER, CLEVELAND INDIANS
NASTY, BUT EFFECTIVE	REPUTATION	MOODY, BUT POWERFUL
A NICE SCHOOL TEACHER	VICTIM	A LOUDMOUTHED YAHOO
JUST SITTING THERE	VICTIM'S TRANSGRESSION	INVITING BELLE TO A KEG PARTY
A BRUISED LEFT ARM	VICTIM'S WOUND	A WELT ON HIS CHEST

MIKE GALLEGO'S GLOVE RECIPE

Mike Gallego started this season with a career batting average of .226, so you can't blame the Oakland A's second baseman for being just a tad obsessed with his defense and the glove with which he plays it. Gallego used the same glove for eight years before replacing it with a new one this season. When it came time to break in the new glove, Gallego knew exactly what to do. Here is the confidential recipe for the properly prepared new glove, courtesy of Mike Gallego:

Step One: Wet glove with warm water. Don't soak it.

Step Two: Pound relentlessly with baseball bat.

Step Three: Put two balls in the pocket, wrap tightly.

Step Four: Unwrap, wet palm of glove with water and throw in clothes dryer (fluff cycle) for five minutes maximum.

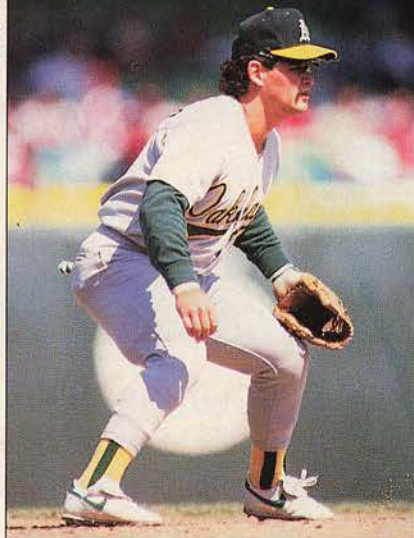
Step Five: Hang to dry.

Step Six: Pound some more with that baseball bat.

Step Seven: Rub liberal amounts of mink oil into the leather.

Step Eight: Go out and play.

—Ron Kroichick



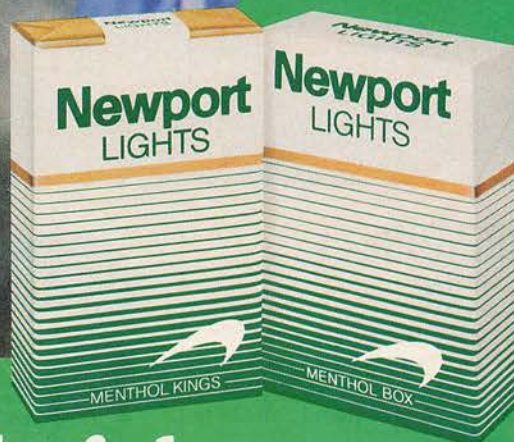
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SPORT TALK



RON VESELY

BILL HALL/ALLSPORT USA

BACK IN THE SADDLE AGAIN...ALMOST

It was door-banging racing of the literal sort. Kyle Petty and Mark Martin were driving side-by-side on lap 71 in the Winston 500 at Talladega Raceway in Alabama last May when Ernie Irvan tried to slip between them. Instead, he set off an accident that damaged 18 cars. Petty was the only driver seriously injured, with a broken left femur protruding from his leg, close to the hip.

"I've been in worse accidents," says the 31-year-old son of Richard Petty. "I've really banged some cars up. But I've never been hit—never been hurt—like this one." His recovery

is coming along well, and he expects to drive an entire race by October or November. But he's not going to rush it. Advice from Darrell Waltrip assures that.

"He said to do the therapy, even if it kills you," Petty says. "He told me to take it easy and take my time. He's still limping, and he feels it's because he rushed it."

Still and all, Petty has no second thoughts about his profession. "I wasn't knocked out after I was hit," he says. "I know what happened, where it happened and why it happened. It didn't bother me. But if I'd been knocked out and didn't know what was going on, I think I'd be pretty wary now."

—Terry Mulgannon



DEFENSIVE SKILLS SHORTSTOPPED

The major leagues aren't hurting for good-fielding shortstops. But some could be better. So why aren't they?

"They're too busy in the batting cage when they should be taking more ground balls," says former all-star shortstop Tony Kubek. Why?

"Because of salary arbitration," says Kubek. "With millions of dollars in salaries, agents are conscientious about offensive stats. Players work so hard in the cage, their focus becomes offense, and by hitting so much, they're drained and can't field as well."

There are exceptions, of course. Baltimore's Cal Ripken Jr. and Detroit's Alan Trammell (pictured) work equally hard on fielding and hitting. But then there are guys such as Kansas City's Kurt Stillwell. "He should be—and could be—a much better fielder," says Kubek.

—Rick Weinberg

ROY FIRESTONE—A REAL JOKE

It's not as if Roy Firestone doesn't already have enough to do, with his sports-personality show on ESPN, "Up Close." Now we can expect to see him headlining in Vegas.

Turns out Firestone is a closet stand-up comic. He's been entertaining at several dozen functions a year, from conventions to celebrity roasts. Hotel magnate Steve Wynn, the boxing promoter, caught the act at a charity dinner and struck a deal.



BOB MEYERS

The big break finally came last year at the Golden Nugget Hotel in Las Vegas, where he opened for Lou Rawls. Firestone did send-ups of Johnny Mathis, Tony Bennett and Carol Channing. One of his best routines had Howard Cosell and Muhammad Ali doing a rap song in tandem. He got, believe it or not, a standing ovation.

Now he's expanding his routine—he intends to do a satirical review. Then there's the scary part: He wants to do songs like "Bobby Darin used to sing. And I'm going to sing those songs...as Roy Firestone."

—Stu Black

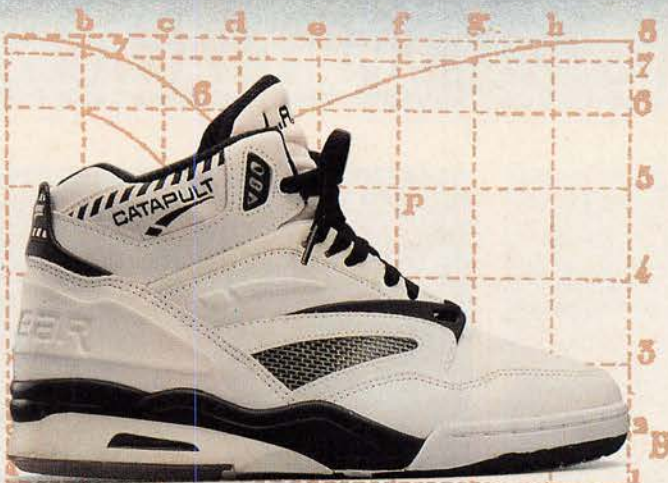
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When you first wear Catapult, the most startling thing you'll notice is that you actually feel something working. That's because something inside Catapult actually *is* working. We call it the Power Feedback System.

Actually, it's four independent systems operating in unison, in one amazingly lightweight package. To explain how Catapult works is best left to our reference booklet, but an abridged version goes as follows.

At the heart of the shoe is the Catapult component. Made of a carbon-fiber composite, this heel-spring mechanism is one of the strongest materials known to man. (Paradoxically, it's also one of the lightest.) It disperses the shock of your impact rapidly and



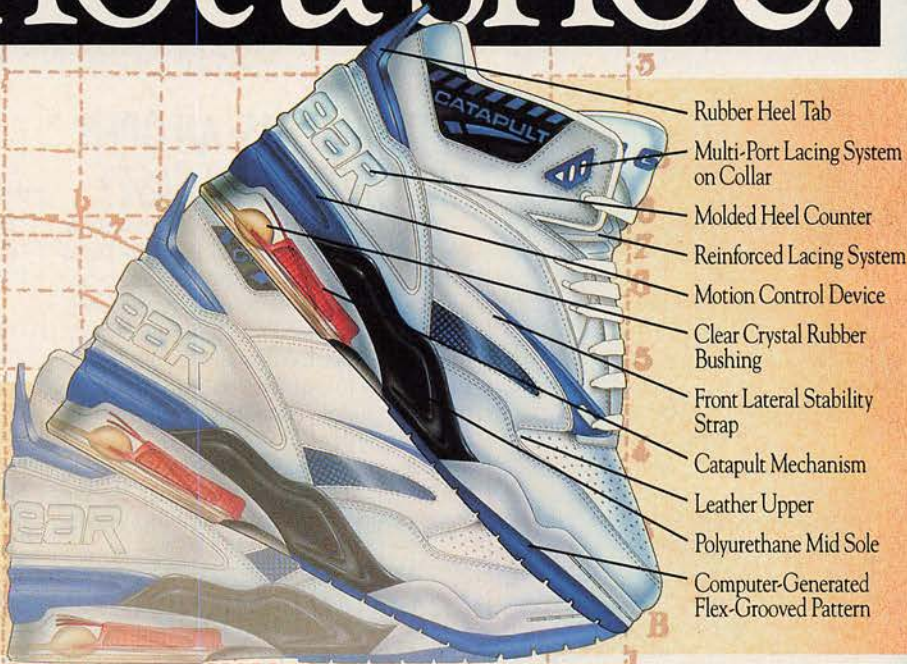
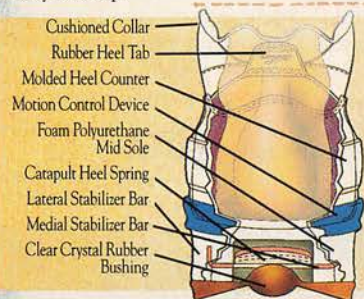
It's not a shoe.

efficiently. Then, like a shoe that rebounds for you, it directs that energy upwards to give you a sensation of thrust.

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Try on Catapults, and feel their power for yourself. Then, if the machine fits, wear it.



POLE VOLZING

Short of breaking a leg, Sergei Bubka (pictured) is going to win the pole vault competition at the World Track and Field Championships, beginning August 24 in Tokyo. Actually, before anyone else could even dream of an upset, the Soviet Union's Bubka may have to break *both* legs. His mastery of the event—and a 19-foot, 11-inch outdoor record—makes victory a near certainty.

It's the competition for second place that'll make things interesting, thanks to a new way of going over the crossbar. It's called "volzing," and the object is to knock the bar off as you go over and replace it before it and you crash to the sponge padding below. Sounds sneaky, but there's nothing in the rule book that prohibits it.

This bizarre technique was developed by Indiana alumnus Dave Volz. "Hey, I'm not saying Dave wouldn't rather be known for something else," says Marshall Goss, one of Volz's coaches. "But it's legal, and you have no idea how much agility it takes."

But *should* Volz, as well as a number of other world-class vaulters, such as America's Kory Tarpenning and France's Thierry Vigneron, be allowed to do it? Lots of coaches and vaulters say no—but the IAAF Technical Committee won't take up the issue until *after* the World Championships. —Tom Kertes



FOCUS ON SPORTS



PETE SAMPRAS: AN OPEN AND SHUTDOWN CASE?

A year ago, Pete Sampras' victory at the U.S. Open was as inspired as it was unexpected. The gangly 19-year-old used a titanic serve to whip Ivan Lendl, John McEnroe and Andre Agassi to win the Open title. Best of all, he did it with the placid facial expression of a daydreamer. Finally, here was someone we could embrace.

But we American tennis fans haven't had much of a chance to do that. As the tennis world returns to Flushing Mead-

ow this month, we still don't really know the young star. It's not because he suffered through a series of leg injuries, and it has nothing to do with some questionable scheduling decisions. It's because his handlers are keeping him from the press.

"It's very mysterious," says NBC tennis analyst Bud Collins. "It's as though they were sequestering him."

"I think it's all very overwhelming [for Sampras]. One moment he's known only to a few people in tennis, and suddenly he's overwhelmed America with his style and with his personality.... I can't even guess what's happened."

—Jeff Weinstock

PGA CHAMPIONSHIP: DOA OR A-OK?

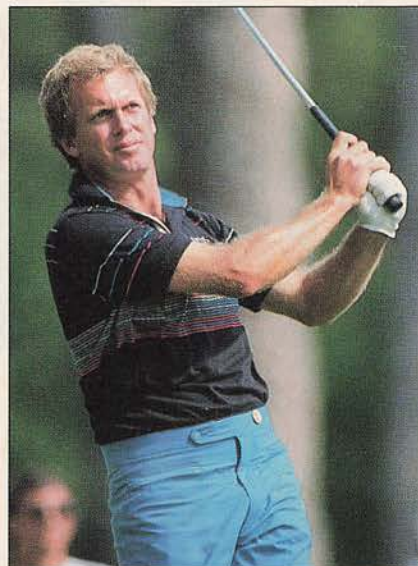
The PGA Championship is one of golf's four majors, but it's annually badmouthed for having a weak field because club pros compete with the Tour variety. But Frank Hannigan, a commentator for ABC and former director of the U.S. Golf Association, defends the event, held this year at Indiana's Crooked Stick Golf Club, August 8-11.

"That's a bad rap," he says. "[There are] 40 club pros, but the other 100-plus players are the cream of the crop. The field is comparable to other majors."

Wayne Grady (pictured) probably agrees. He won last year's championship—and \$225,000.

—Patrick Quinn

FOCUS ON SPORTS



SPORT TALK

OLYMPIC HEROES OF '92 TRENARY TRIES HARDER

"I'll just do my best," says Jill Trenary, "and have faith that I can rise to the occasion." In 1990, she was the best figure skater in the world after winning that year's World Championships. Now, approaching the 1992 Winter Olympics next February in Albertville, France, the three-time U.S. women's champion will have to fight for a berth on the team.

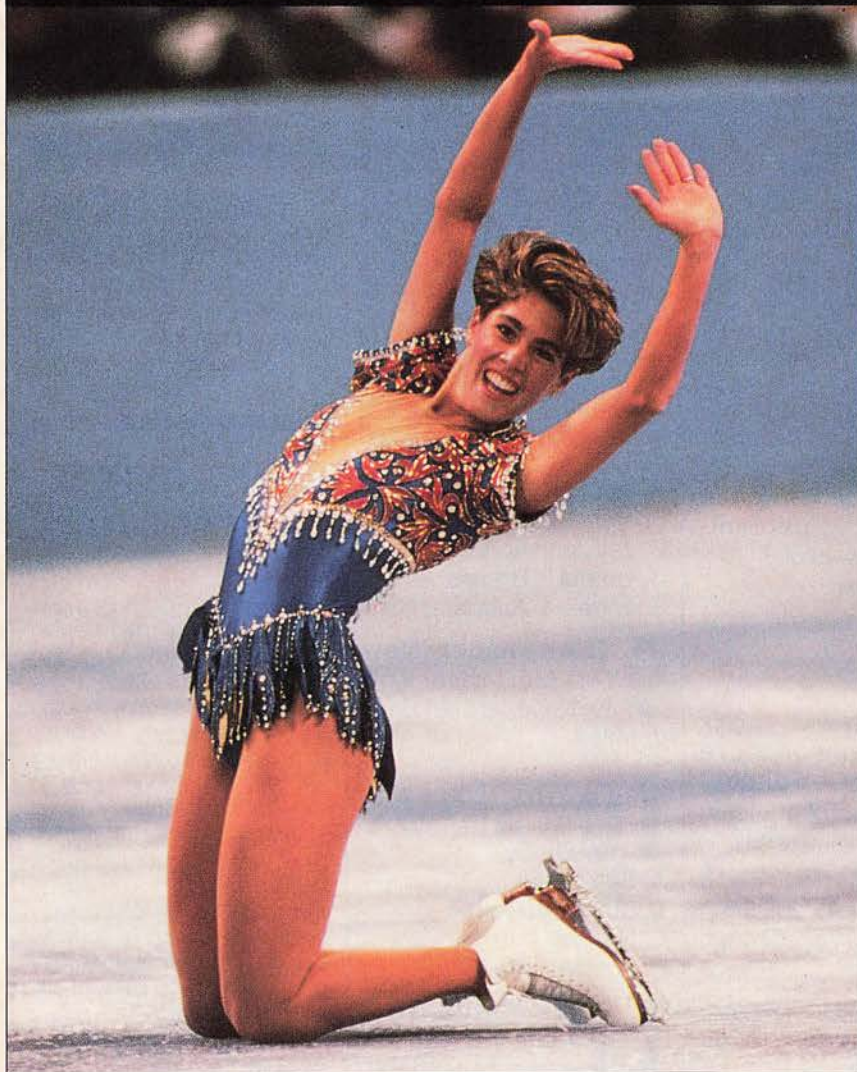
The problem? In part, it's the competition. Five U.S. women are world medalists, and there are only three slots on the team. One of the women, Kristi Yamaguchi, aced Trenary out of the gold medal at the '90 Goodwill Games. Another, Tonya

Harding, is the first U.S. woman to successfully pull off a triple axel in competition. Then there are Nancy Kerrigan and Holly Cook, both of whom have taken thirds at world class levels.

That just begins to outline the magnitude of her challenges. International skating eliminated an element of competition at which Trenary was especially strong, the compulsory figures. Then, last fall, her now-former coaches, Christa and Carlo Fassi, moved to Italy. Early this year, she was sidelined because of an ankle infection.

Trenary's not worried. "I went through a rough time when I was injured," she says. "But I've always done better as an underdog."

—Terry Mulgannon



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TO FACE THE DAY

SPORT QUIZ

How's your sports IQ? The famous SPORT Quiz has been separating the savvy fan from the weekend wimp for decades. See how you do with these 13 questions. Then check the answers below for your score, and rate yourself as follows:

12-13 correct: Sports genius
9-11 correct: Good fan
6-8 correct: Working too hard
3-5 correct: To the showers
0-2 correct: Try knitting

ANSWER THE SPORT STUMPER AND WIN A SPORT PIN. No matter how you do on this month's quiz, we'll send you the SPORT pin pictured here if you correctly answer the SPORT STUMPER. Include your



name, address and age and send to SPORT Quiz, 8490 Sunset Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90069. Limit one per person, and all entries must be postmarked by August 15, 1991.

1 Since 1970, only one receiver (pictured) has been selected as the first pick in the NFL draft. Who is he?

2 Name the New York Ranger who led the team in goals scored during the 1990-91 season.

- A. Mike Gartner
- B. Bernie Nicholls
- C. Brian Leetch
- D. Darren Turcotte

3 Which NHL team gave up the most goals last season?

- A. Winnipeg Jets
- B. Quebec Nordiques
- C. Detroit Red Wings
- D. Toronto Maple Leafs

4 Name the player who led the NBA in rebounds last season.



5 Who led the NBA in free-throw percentage last season?

- A. Jeff Malone
- B. Larry Bird
- C. Reggie Miller
- D. Spud Webb

6 This New York Islander won more Stanley Cup playoff games than any goalie in NHL history. Who is he?

7 Whom did Pete Sampras defeat in the 1990 U.S. Open finals?

8 Match the former major-leaguer with his first team.

- A. Joe Torre
 - B. George Foster
 - C. John Mayberry
 - D. Jay Johnstone
1. Giants 2. Braves
3. Angels 4. Astros

9 Name the only New York Met to ever lead the National League in doubles.

10 Which horse won the 1991 Kentucky Derby?

- A. Sea Cadet
- B. Strike the Gold
- C. Hansel
- D. Lost Mountain

11 Name the NBA team that had the worst record in

the 1990-91 season.

12 Which NBA player led all rookies in scoring last year?

- A. Derrick Coleman
- B. Lionel Simmons
- C. Felton Spencer
- D. Tyrone Hill

13 Tom Kelly is one of four managers to guide the Minnesota Twins to division or AL titles. Name the other three.

—William Ladson and Jeff Weinstock

STUMPER

Name the first gymnast to perform a back somersault on the balance beam.

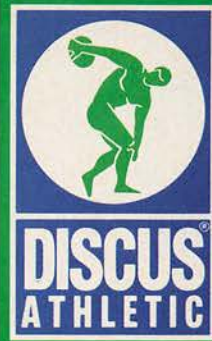
AUGUST 1991 STUMPER ANSWER

Paul Molitor ["Name the major-leaguer who had the longest hitting streak during the 1980s."]

THIS MONTH'S QUIZ ANSWERS

1. Irving Fryar (He was the first pick in the 1984 NFL Draft) 2. A (Gartner led the team with 49 goals) 3. B (The Nordiques gave up 354 goals) 4. David Robinson (averaging 13 rebounds per game) 5. C (Miller's free throw percentage was .918) 6. Billy Smith (with 88 playoff wins) 7. Andre Agassi 8. A-2, B-1, C-4 and D-3 9. Gregg Jefferies (with 40 in 1990) 10. B 11. The Denver Nuggets (20-62) 12. A (Coleman averaged 18.4 points per game) 13. Sam Mele (1965), Billy Martin (1969) and Bill Rigney (1970)

FOURTH QUARTER STRATEGY MEETING



WORK CLOTHES FOR ATHLETES

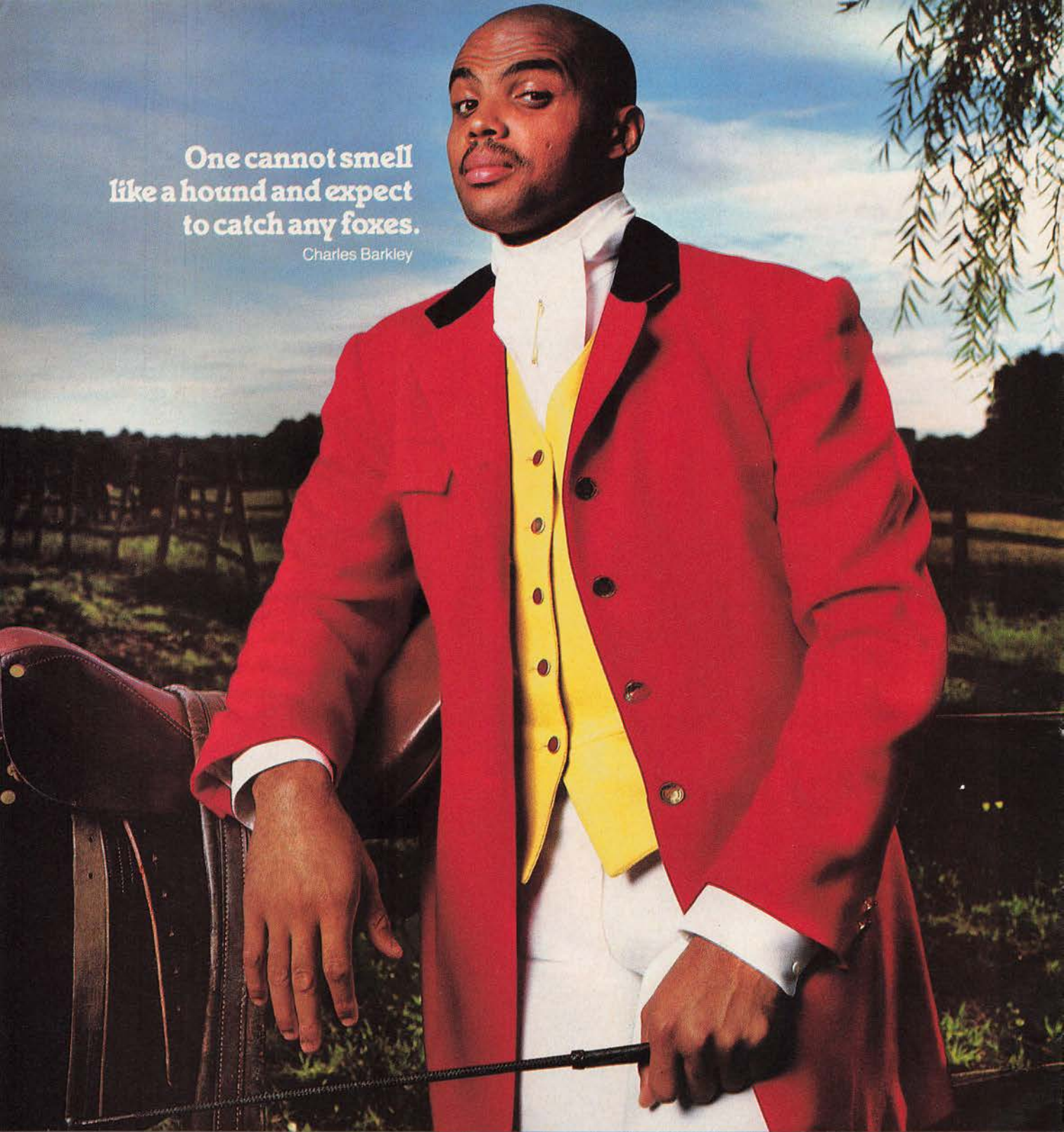


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JEROME BROWN

"I'M NOT THE TYPE OF PERSON YOU DARE TO DO ANYTHING. IF YOU SAY, 'DON'T DO IT,' IT'S DONE." /By Larry Platt

"This is my baby here; I love it," Jerome Brown, the Philadelphia Eagles' All-Pro defensive lineman, says as he stands in the master bedroom of his Brooksville, Florida, home. What he's holding, gingerly, is an AK-47 semiautomatic rifle from his prized gun collection.

"I got about 10 acres here, so we shoot into that big, 6-foot dirt pile around back," Brown says. "It's safe that way." But Brown admits that it's sometimes more fun for him not to be safe. Then there's his thing with exotic cars, including a 1960 Chevy Bel Air hot rod, a 1970 Cadillac convertible and a ZR1 Corvette.

"I can take most of them up to 170 miles per hour," he says as he puts the gun down and begins to leaf through the pages of a hot rod magazine. "I like to do a lot of street racing in my spare time. I'll try anything on wheels. You could say I'm a wild and crazy guy. Anyone on the team will tell you that I'm not the type of person you dare to do anything. If you say, 'Don't do it,' it's done."

As the season nears, however, Brown's thoughts are turning from his toys to his profession. Although it culminated in a starting Pro Bowl slot, Brown's 1990 season was controversial, to say the least. Brown's weight bothered the Philadelphia coaching staff. The team's media guide put it at 295 pounds; Brown now admits



he was really closer to 325. All season, he recorded just one quarterback sack, compared with 10½ in 1989.

"The media looks at the number of sacks, but my peers respected me enough to vote me into the Pro Bowl," Brown says. "In 1989, other players were telling me I'd never make the Pro Bowl, because I got in too many fights. 'Well,' I said, 'then I won't make the Pro Bowl, because if someone chop-blocks me, I'm going to kick

some ass.'"

If making the Pro Bowl settled the arguments about Brown's unfulfilled potential during his first four years, the firing of coach Buddy Ryan after last season exposed Brown to new controversies. Brown had become the symbol of Ryan's Eagles, a swashbuckling loudmouth, able to back up his bravado with fierce play. After Ryan's dismissal, some unidentified Eagles players told Philadelphia reporters that Brown

had been "Buddy's boy." Brown, it seemed, had been permitted privileges denied other players. He didn't run during practice and, sometimes, didn't practice at all. According to the newspapers, he lost more than \$30,000 in card games and flew girlfriends to Eagles road games.

"The media blew that all out of proportion," he says. "Man, losing \$30,000? It never got over \$3,000, but that's owed to a bunch of guys. And hardly anyone pays anyway. My agent and my accountant would kick my butt if I lost that much. As for not practicing, Buddy knew I'd give him all I got when Sunday came. He didn't treat me like a kid. Before the playoff game against Washington, my shoulder was shot up four times with Novocain. But they don't put that in the papers, because they don't realize the chances you take with your body when all you care about is winning. Cowards in the media and the front office who hated Buddy started all those stories."

In fact, dating back to his high-profile college career at the University of Miami, Brown has had a tempestuous relationship with the media. No matter how well he plays, he says, the press always wants to talk about his off-the-field behavior. In college, it was the now-infamous walkout he led of Hurricanes players at the Fiesta Bowl dinner before the 1986 national championship

ONE ON ONE

against Penn State. ("Did the Japanese go and sit down and have dinner with Pearl Harbor before they bombed 'em?" he declared.) There was also the controversy prompted by his possession of a firearm on campus.

In the pros, his reputation as a party animal receives more attention, he says, than his animalistic treatment of opposing quarterbacks.

"I stay out until 4 in the morning in Philly, but so what?" Brown says. "Whose business is that anyway? I mean, that stuff about flying girls out to the games and losing money on cards. Who cares? No one else is paying for it, and I was doing my job. Why should they care?"

Brown settles onto the sofa in the center of his spacious living room. With remote control in hand, he rapidly changes the channels of the television before him, searching for one of his favorite cop shows. He's 26, and having been in the public eye since the mid-'80s, he's clearly tiring of the limits placed upon him by celebrityhood.

"I don't look for controversy; I try to avoid it when I can," he says, settling on a rerun of *Miami Vice*. "But you can only take so much. I can be somewhere and people come up and say, 'Jerome Brown, you ain't this,' and 'You ain't that,' and 'The Giants are gonna kill you.' If I'm out with friends, they'll take it up because they know if I get started, I don't stop until I hurt someone."

Brown almost hurt the wrong guy back at training camp in 1990. During a scrimmage, he had to be restrained from going after then-offensive coordinator Rich Kotite, Ryan's successor as head coach. Brown assigns the incident to the buried past, though he'd probably react the same today.

"The offensive line was

going after my legs on every play," he says. "So I said, 'Hey, this is training camp, man. You cut me on my knee, and I'll kick your ass.' And Rich got involved."

"But it's behind us now. He's even told me I'm lucky they held me back, or he would have taught me a lesson."

His headline-making lifestyle aside, Brown insists he has a softer side. "The only rough part of Jerome is on the football field," he says. Last winter, for instance, he rented two Greyhound bus-

"I feel like a machine right now. I'm going to be coming into that pocket so fast, at my weight, it's going to be like a Mack truck or a locomotive putting a big-time hurt on."

es and took 200 kids from the Brooksville streets where he grew up to the Super Bowl. He has two kids of his own, Jerome, 8, and Donnell, 6, although he's never married. A couple of years ago, he built a four-bedroom home for his parents next to his own, and he's bought new cars for each of them as well as for his sister.

"I never had what you might call a real job," he says. "It's always been football for me. So I try to spread the blessing. And, in a way, buying my cars and guns keeps me out of trouble. My dad always told me, 'I don't care what you do, so long as you don't get into those

drugs.' I thank God for the coaches and my agent because they keep me from doing real crazy stuff."

Brown surprises those who meet him with his apparently earnest embrace of religion. He was, after all, a member of his church choir while growing up in Brooksville.

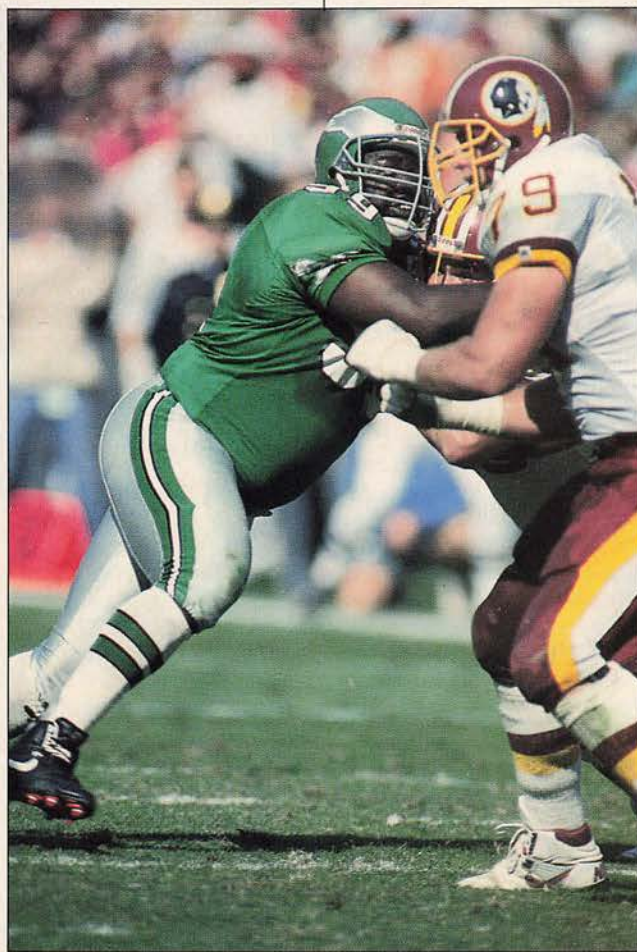
"People say, 'You come from a religious background?'" he says, laughing. "I say, 'Yeah, you gotta have a black sheep in every family.' But, really, I go to church when I can. But not as often as my mom and Reggie (White, Brown's teammate and a licensed minister) want me to. I know right from wrong, and that doesn't mean I always do right."

Jerome Brown raises himself off the couch. He is due at the fitness center for

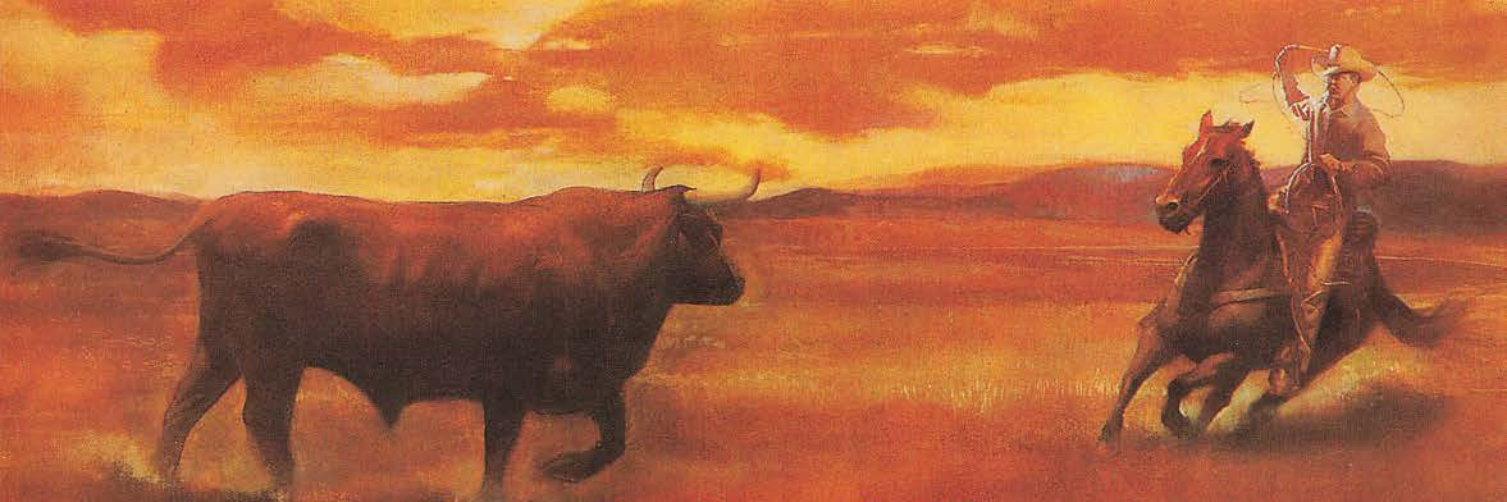
his daily workout, part of a rigorous offseason program he hopes will put him at a playing weight of 290 pounds this year. Last season, even with his characteristic bulk, he still ran a 4.9 40-yard dash. With his slimmed-down build, he's hoping that he can approximate teammate White's awesome combination of strength and speed.

"I feel like a machine right now," he says, his eyes widening like a child's as he surveys a staggering collection of car keys from which to choose. "I'm going to be coming into that pocket so fast, at my weight, it's going to be like a Mack truck or a locomotive putting a big-time hurt on." ★

Larry Platt is a free-lance writer from Philadelphia.



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THE SPORT 1991 NFL PREVIEW

THE RAIDERS ARE BACK IN BLACK
AND BAD TO THE BONE

By Kevin Lamb (NFC) & J. David Miller (AFC)

THE SPORT PREDICTIONS

NFC PICKS

WEST

1. SAN FRANCISCO 49ERS
2. NEW ORLEANS SAINTS
3. LOS ANGELES RAMS
4. ATLANTA FALCONS

CENTRAL

1. CHICAGO BEARS
2. TAMPA BAY BUCCANEERS
3. MINNESOTA VIKINGS
4. GREEN BAY PACKERS
5. DETROIT LIONS

EAST

1. WASHINGTON REDSKINS
2. NEW YORK GIANTS
3. PHILADELPHIA EAGLES
4. DALLAS COWBOYS
5. PHOENIX CARDINALS

NFC WILD CARDS

New York Giants, Tampa Bay Buccaneers,
New Orleans Saints

NFC CHAMPION

Washington Redskins

AFC PICKS

WEST

1. LOS ANGELES RAIDERS
2. KANSAS CITY CHIEFS
3. DENVER BRONCOS
4. SAN DIEGO CHARGERS
5. SEATTLE SEAHAWKS

CENTRAL

1. HOUSTON OILERS
2. PITTSBURGH STEELERS
3. CINCINNATI BENGALS
4. CLEVELAND BROWNS

EAST

1. BUFFALO BILLS
2. MIAMI DOLPHINS
3. NEW YORK JETS
4. INDIANAPOLIS COLTS
5. NEW ENGLAND PATRIOTS

AFC WILD CARDS

Kansas City Chiefs, Miami Dolphins, Pittsburgh
Steelers

AFC CHAMPION

Los Angeles Raiders

AND THE WINNERS ARE...

SUPER BOWL CHAMPION

Los Angeles Raiders

NFC MVP

Jerry Rice Also watch: Mark Rypien, Barry
Sanders, Neal Anderson *Legitimate long shots:*
Andre Rison, Randall Cunningham

AFC MVP

Warren Moon Also Watch: Dan Marino, Jim
Kelly, Thurman Thomas *Legitimate long shots:*
Derrick Thomas, Rod Woodson

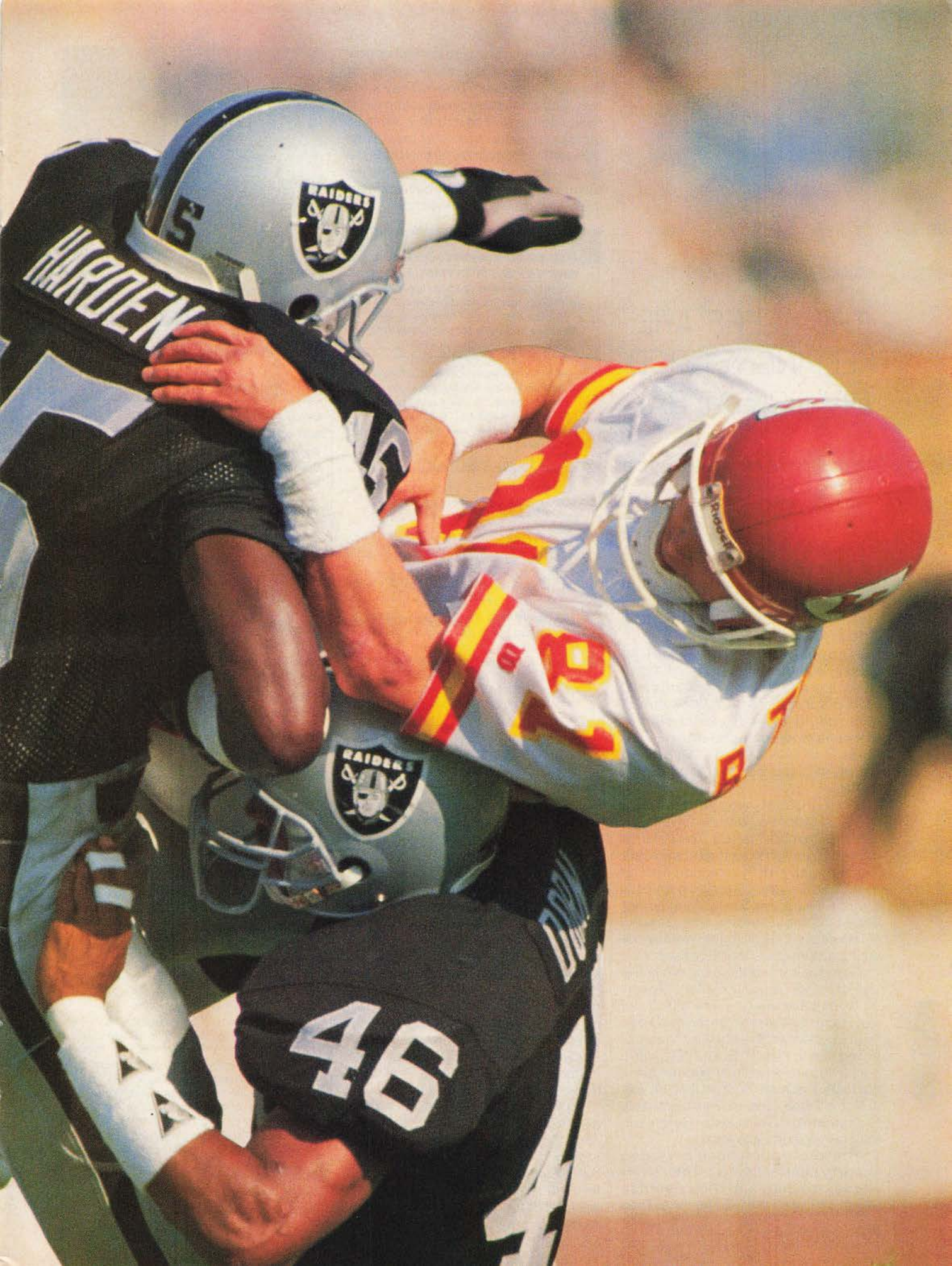
NFC ROOKIE OF THE YEAR

Alvin Harper Also watch: Todd Lyght, Russell
Maryland *Legitimate long shots:* Ted
Washington, Jerry Evans, Bruce Pickens

AFC ROOKIE OF THE YEAR

Mike Croel Also watch: Alfred Williams, Eric
Turner *Legitimate long shots:* Stanley Richard,
Dave McCloughan, Randal Hill

AP/WIDEWORLD



NFC WEST

THE 49ERS ARE KEEPING A GOOD DIVISION AT BAY

1

SAN FRANCISCO 49ERS

Let's look at the worst case. Joe Montana goes down in the first game. What happens to the 49ers then? Say they go 2-6 in games they trail after halftime instead of last year's 6-2. That makes them 10-6 instead of 14-2. That's still good enough to win the NFC West.

It could get worse than that, of course. Without Montana, the defense could play with less confidence. It could blow leads more often. The running game could get even worse without Montana to keep opponents on their heels. In other words, the 49ers could fade away faster than a radio signal in a tunnel.

They probably wouldn't though. Even last year, they won six times without scoring more than 20. The defense carried them as far as the offense did. Kevin Fagan and Pierce Holt are the most underrated defensive ends in football. Of course, Steve Young is not Babe Laufenberg either. If he played a whole season, he probably would rank among the league's top 10 passers.

Of more immediate concern is the loss of Roger Craig. The 49ers expected to lose him anyway. He didn't run like Roger Craig even before his knee injury last year. That's why they exposed him to Plan B. But it still leaves a hole unless rookie Ricky Watters turns out to be a lot more durable than he was at Notre Dame. The answer is probably to alternate him with Dexter Carter and maybe even someone else.

The 49ers don't need a running game to control the ball. Their short passes do that, and their defense doesn't loiter on the field for long. They

need a running game to control opposing defenses. As it is, other teams can play the pass every down. They know they'll stop the run anyway, even with a nickel defense. That strategy, week after week, eroded even Montana's performance last year. Against those defenses, if an already shaky line slips any farther, the 49ers could be looking at that worst case sooner than later.

49ERS FORECAST

WHY THEY'LL FINISH FIRST: No good reason. After five years on top in the NFC West, they're actually overdue for a fall. But this division belongs to Joe Montana and Jerry Rice until they drop it.

HOT DATE: September 2 against the Giants in New Jersey. On the first Monday night, the 49ers can avenge their defeat in the NFC Championship game, extend their road winning streak to 20 games and pull ahead of half the league.

GET RID OF: What's left to dump? The 49ers finished last season with five players from their first Super Bowl team. They finished April with one—Montana. They're on a budget now.

GET: Someone who can run the ball more than 141 times a season.

EXTRA POINT: If Plan B pickup Roy Foster can play right guard, he could help the 49ers more than Roger Craig or Ronnie Lott would have. Harris Barton could move to right tackle and Steve Wallace to left tackle, where Bubba Paris was inadequate late last season.

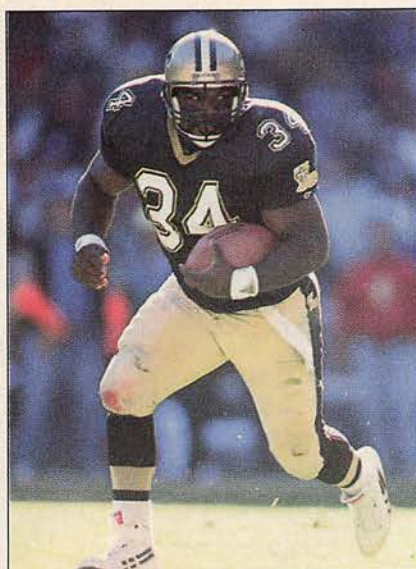
2

NEW ORLEANS SAINTS

After three straight years in decline, the Saints appear ready to rebound. They're strong at offensive line, running back and linebacker, and they're promising at defensive line and quarterback.

Quarterback? Yes, Steve Walsh had bad enough stats last year to make a skunk hold its nose, and he can't throw a football through a window pane. But the stats weren't so disappointing for a second-year man who spent less than three weeks with his team before playing. Walsh can throw the ball through an open porthole. He has a knack for making winning plays. He's a leader. If he's coached well, he could be Jim McMahon with a pleasant disposition.

Until that happens, the Saints will be a high-fiber, low-sugar team, more blah than ooh-and-aaah. They ranked fifth in sack differential, which reflects on both lines, but 28th in interception differential, which reflects on the people who touch the ball. The same defense



Craig Heyward is faster than he looks and could be a feature back despite his weight. Look for close games from the Saints. Prediction: Second.

that had only eight interceptions was solid enough to be in the NFL's top five in both yards per completion and first downs per pass attempt, meaning it shut down both the long pass and the short pass.

The Saints need more big plays on offense. Counting the playoffs, they won only six of 10 games when they held opponents to 17 points or less. But they'll frustrate most offenses again this year. They'll be back in the playoffs if they stop frustrating their own.

SAINTS FORECAST

WHY THEY'LL FINISH SECOND: They can match their offensive line and defensive front seven with just about anybody's. Their defense will keep games close enough to beat the Rams and Falcons, and their offense will keep games too close to beat the 49ers.

HOT DATE: November 10 at home against San Francisco. The Saints have lost five of their last six to the 49ers, but two defeats were by one point.

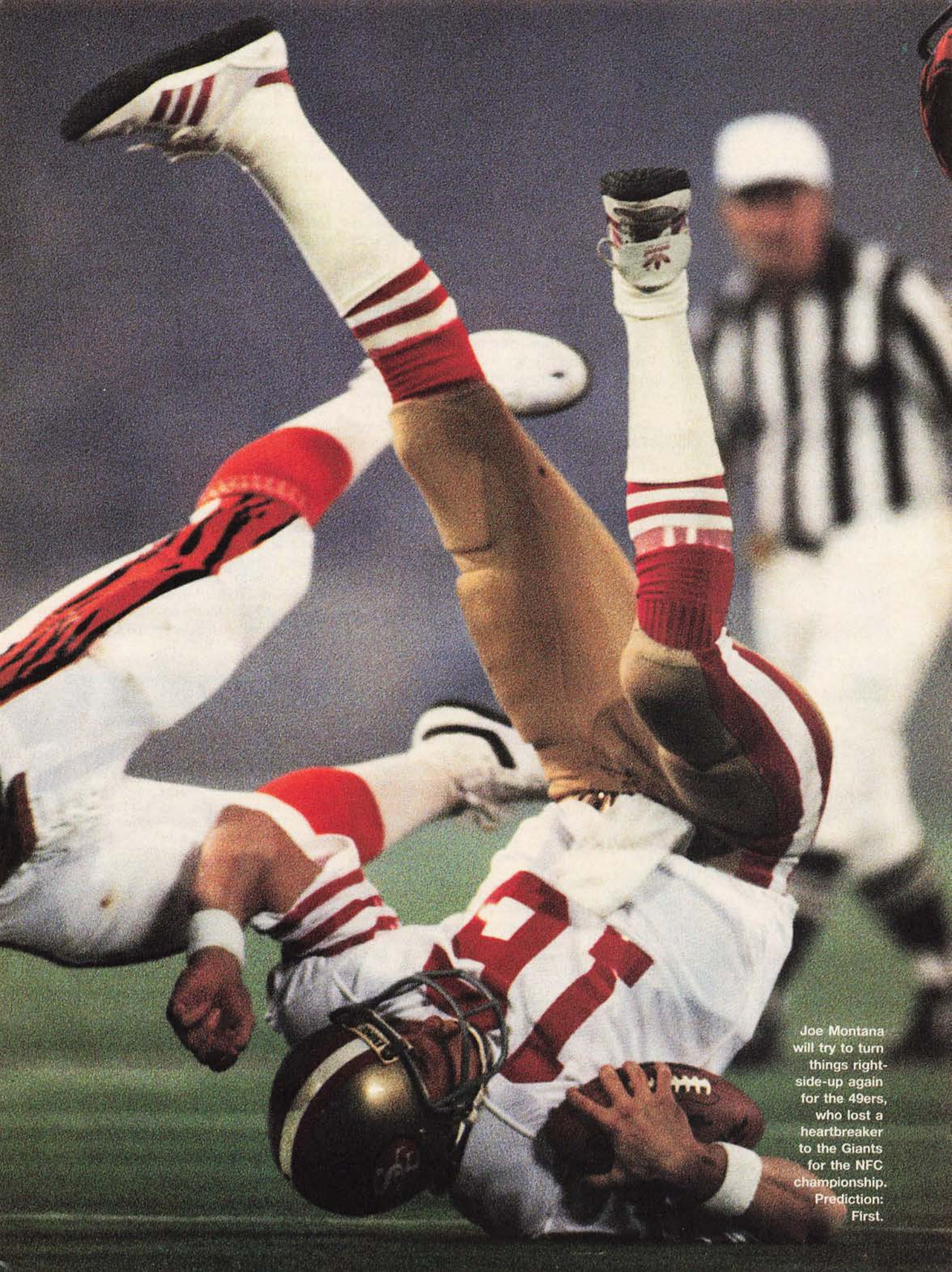
GET RID OF: Whatever it is that's holding back Craig Heyward. Don't think he can't be a feature back just because he outweighs some guards. He has 4.5 yards per carry in his career. It was 4.6 last year. He's faster than he looks.

GET: A sprinting wide receiver across from under-appreciated Eric Martin. The Saints are working on it, with Brett Perriman and ex-Charger Quinn Early.

EXTRA POINT: The Saints were the only NFC team besides Washington to rank in the NFL's top 12 in sacks per pass play and yards per non-quarterback rush, the two key offensive-line stats.

TOM DIPACE

MICKEY PFEGER



Joe Montana will try to turn things right-side-up again for the 49ers, who lost a heartbreaker to the Giants for the NFC championship. Prediction: First.

3

LOS ANGELES RAMS

Have the Rams had Soviet economists advising them on draft day, or did they figure out on their own how to turn a

field of wheat into empty supermarket shelves? Los Angeles had three extra picks in each of the first two rounds in 1988 and '89, thanks to the Eric Dickerson deal. They spun that gold into straw by selecting halfbacks Gaston Green and Cleveland Gary and wideout Aaron Cox with their first-round picks, and cornerback Darryl Henley and linebackers Frank Stams and Fred Strickland with their seconds. Add defensive end Bill Hawkins, their other top pick in '89, and they still haven't produced a Pro Bowl star. True, Gary and Strickland have emerged, but they still didn't equal the value of Eric Dickerson.

Was it bad drafting or bad coaching? Green was clearly a bust, Cox backs up a strong position and Gary still might be a feature back, so the question applies mostly to the defensive players. They've had some injuries and some ill-advised position shifts. There might still

be time for a good coach to salvage them.

New defensive coordinator Jeff Fisher is a good coach. Not that Fritz Shurmur wasn't, but he was expected to give the Rams a Vikings-style defense last year, and he never coached that way. Fisher comes from the Eagles. Close enough.

The defensive collapse last year wasn't sudden, and it wasn't a one-year fluke. In 1988 and '89, the Rams won only six of 15 games when they scored 20-27 points. Jim Everett and the good pass rush hid a lot of weaknesses. Last year, however, the defense was so bad, opposing passers had a rating of 94.1. Everett tried to compensate by matching big plays, and he wound up attempting hopeless plays and throwing interceptions. He's still a good enough quarterback to go to a Super Bowl, but he can't get there alone without a ticket. At best, the defense is a year away from helping him.

RAMS FORECAST

WHY THEY'LL FINISH THIRD: It will almost surely take more than a year to patch the defense back together, and even if it doesn't, the offensive line could start unraveling any time.

HOT DATE: November 25 at home against San Francisco. The Rams have won one of their last 10 home games against the 49ers. They were 2-6 at home last year. It's hard to reach the playoffs without a home-field advantage.

GET RID OF: The front-office penny pinching. The Rams have had more than their share of injuries in recent years, which is not surprising on a team that's usually among the leaders in holdouts.

GET: The ball to Robert Delpino. He averaged 4.6 yards per carry and 9.7 per catch in 1988-89. Then last year, when the Rams were looking through closets and under cushions for a running back, they gave him 13 carries and 15 catches.

EXTRA POINT: Cleveland Gary fumbled 12 times last year. He's an above-average pass receiver. His hands are fine. He was either pressing too much like the rest of the offense, lacking proper concentration, or assuming too heavy a workload.

4

ATLANTA FALCONS

Can a blitzing defense win without great pass rushers if the coverage men are good enough?

Tim McKyer and fleet first-round rookie Bruce Pickens join Deion Sanders at corner this year, but the idea isn't promising. Defensive end Tim Green led the team with six sacks

last year. Next came Jesse Tuggle, an inside linebacker. A low sack total doesn't necessarily doom a pass defense. The Giants and Steelers led the NFL in some key pass defense stats without many sacks. But the Giants and Steelers commit more players to coverage. The Falcons like to blitz.

Coach Jerry Glanville says his defense doesn't blitz for sacks; it blitzes to force hurried passes. OK, two other yardsticks that measure blitzing effectiveness are the percentage of passes that go for first downs and the completion percentage. The blitzing Eagles led the league in both categories and still gave up too many big plays. The Falcons were around the league average in both categories and didn't give themselves a chance.

Offenses are unloading the ball too quickly for nonstop blitzing to stop the pass these days. It does shut down a running game. The Falcons' run defense leaped from 28th to third. But that only gave opponents more incentive to take their chances in a shootout.

Atlanta's offense can win some passing festivals with Chris Miller healthy. But if his shoulder surgery doesn't mend faster than expected, it will open with Gilbert Renfroe or rookie Brett Favre at quarterback. If that's the case, the Falcons will be hard-pressed to improve even if the defensive experiment works.

FALCONS FORECAST

WHY THEY'LL FINISH FOURTH: The other guys will make more big plays than the Falcons, especially if quarterback Chris Miller's shoulder injury is the career threat it appeared to be.

HOT DATE: November 3 at San Francisco. This is the Falcons' first division road game. They've lost eight straight of those, and they're only 3-15 overall against NFC West teams since 1988.

GET RID OF: The inconsistency on offense. The Falcons ranked 10th in NFL scoring last year but had six games when they couldn't score more than 14 points.

GET: Steve Broussard out of the doghouse. He was a promising rookie runner early last year, then struggled with injuries and spent most of the second half of the season gathering dust. He's got too much talent to sacrifice.

EXTRA POINT: Jerry Glanville has worked hard at cultivating a legion of critics, but one thing they can't knock is his kicking teams. The Falcons blocked nine kicks last year and ranked in the top three in both covering and returning kickoffs.



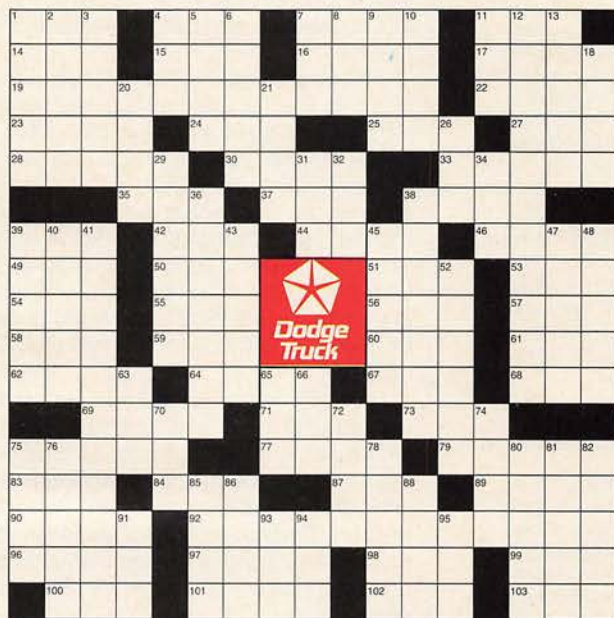
Henry Ellard is still a premier NFL receiver, but it will take the Rams a year to recover from last year's disaster. Prediction: Third.

The Dodge SPORT word

Puzzle

By Stanley Newman

"SEPTEMBER IN SPORTS HISTORY"



Across

1. Navy officer: Abbr.
4. Its first preseason strike started in Sept. '82
7. Appear
11. Civil War initials
14. Author Levin
15. "Sting like a ____"
16. 10-time NCAA basketball champs
17. ____ one (fastball)
19. Hit sixth grand slam of season in Sept. '87: 2 wds.
22. Boxer Johansson's nickname
23. Modern Pentathlon prop
24. '92 Winter Olympics continent: Abbr.
25. Stubborn ____ mule: 2 wds.
27. Expected
28. "ADVANTAGE: ____"
30. Prepare for a team photo
33. NFLer turned prime-time actor
35. Rode the bench
37. Actor Beatty
38. Giants manager from 1961 to '64
39. Magnavox competitor
42. Toothpaste type
44. Beat, barely
46. James Brown's music
49. Gambler's marker
50. Durocher or Cardenas
51. Foul caller
53. Volleyball gold-medal winners at Seoul: Abbr.
54. Gooden and Erving: Abbr.
55. Clock setting at the Meadowslands: Abbr.
56. Gorilla
57. Strike out
58. ____ on (reach base)
59. AL's 10th men: Abbr.
60. Q followers
61. Racehorse classification
62. Drops a pop
64. Sculling needs
67. 1950s first baseman Fondy
68. Marks a ballot
69. "We want ____!" (Shea shout): 2 wds.
71. Chow down
73. Many months: Abbr.
75. More qualified
77. Short, quick pass
79. French Open winner in '90
83. Mentalist Geller
84. The ____ (Phillies' stadium)
87. Saberhagen stat
89. NBAer, in headlines
90. On the ____ (away)
92. PGA championship winner, Sept. '65: 2 wds.
96. Corrosive chemical
97. Hidden-ball trick, for instance
98. Hither, thither and ____
99. A DiMaggio brother
100. First-aid box
101. Ye ____ Tea Shoppe
102. Former baseball exec Thrift
103. West Point grads: Abbr.

Down

1. Helped out
2. AL Rookie of the Year in '50
3. Hairy, like a horse
4. The Heat's league: Abbr.
5. Celebration
6. Off-speed pitch
7. Arizona hoopster
8. Heart chart: Abbr.
9. Singer Fitzgerald
10. He hit his 600th homer in Sept. '69
11. Blackhawks' home, for short
12. Perfect-game pitcher in Sept. '65: 2 wds.
13. Dispute a call
18. Activist
20. Actresses Ryan and Foster
21. Mashie-niblick
26. Dentists' group: Abbr.
29. Made 3 on a par-3
31. Observe
32. Cooperstown outfielder Roush
34. Train lines: Abbr.
36. Opening drive: 2 wds.
38. "Long count" fight loser in Sept. '27
39. Riva ____ ('72 Kentucky Derby winner)
40. Kitchen tool
41. Amrica's Cup winning yacht of Sept. '83: 2 wds.
43. "____ luck!"
45. Forward's teammate
47. Customary practice
48. Bowling alleys
52. AL Rookie of the Year in '63
63. Pronoun for sloops
65. Wrestling official
66. Charlie O's third baseman
70. Sportscaster Cross
72. Stadium level
74. Office worker: Abbr.
75. Subjective sensation
76. He broke the single-season stolen base record in Sept. '74
78. Says grace
80. U.S. Open tennis winner in Sept. '87
81. G-man Ness
82. Skier's turning maneuvers
85. Hockey Hall of Famer's nickname
86. Ed "Too ____" Jones
88. Greeting at sea
91. Banned insecticide: Abbr.
93. Gets the ____ (is selected)
94. Recolor
95. Hit ____ run

Puzzle answers on page 85



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Advantage: Dodge



NFC CENTRAL

WHO ELSE BUT THE BEARS IN THE BLACK-AND- BLUE?

1

CHICAGO BEARS

The Bears' offensive coaches work the word "balance" into their conversations more often than accountants.

It's a code word for passing. The Bears gained only 51 percent of their yards on pass plays last year. As they learned in January, they can win the division that way, but they can't beat many playoff teams.

They have the quarterback. Jim Harbaugh was the NFL's ninth-ranked passer in his first full season as a starter. In 13 years since the 1978 rules changes, the Bears are one of only three teams to rank last in passing yards with a quarterback who ranked above 20th. Harbaugh was blamed early last year for holding back the offense, but it's clear now that a ground-hugging offense holds back Harbaugh instead.

It doesn't do halfback Neal Anderson any favors either. He averaged 86 yards in his first five games last season. Then, as more defenses used eight-man fronts that defied the Bears to pass, he slipped to 66 per game in the next five and 50 per game in the last six.

The good news is offensive coordinator Greg Landry already has installed a short-passing game that fits well in a low-risk offense and was effective the few times Chicago used it last year. They might have used it more, but Landry missed much of training camp with viral encephalitis, and coach Mike Ditka took over the offense. Now he says Landry will run things this year.

The defense is strong again. It led the league in interceptions, with Mark

Carrier and Shaun Gayle setting the standard for the '90s of fast safeties who can hit hard and play either side. Two starting linemen are 30 or over, but another one, William Perry, might have been the league's most improved player. All the defense needs is more points to protect.

BEARS FORECAST

WHY THEY'LL FINISH FIRST: They play in the NFC Central. Who else is going to do it? The schedule is much tougher this year, but the running and defense should keep the Bears ahead of their competition.

HOT DATE: September 15 at home against the Giants. The only winning team Chicago beat last year was Seattle in the opener. The Giants are the first of three 1990 winners the Bears will play in four early weeks, and they're the team that embarrassed the Bears in the playoffs.

GET RID OF: The distinction of having an offensive line intact since 1985. That venerable unit helped the Bears rank fourth in yards per carry and sacks allowed in '89, but Chicago fell back to 17th in sacks last year.

GET: A passing game that takes flight before it is third and long.

EXTRA POINT: The Bears have 12 former first-round picks on their roster, including 10 starters. All 13 of their own No. 1 picks since 1981 are still in the league, and they haven't blown a first-round pick since personnel director Bill Tobin joined them in 1975.

2

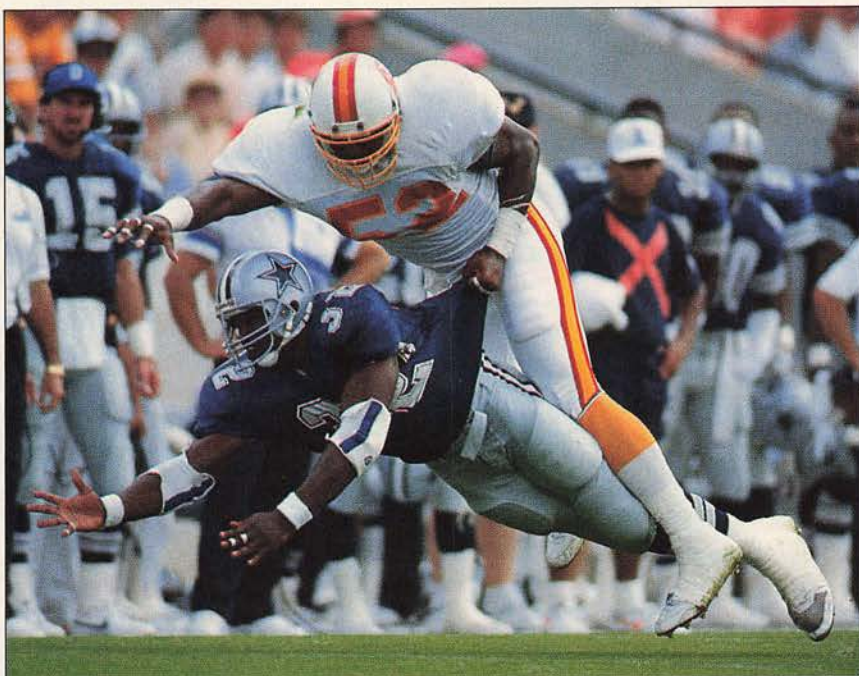
TAMPA BAY BUCCANEERS

When the Bucs replaced coach Ray Perkins with Richard Williamson, they finally untied the cement shoes that kept them sinking in the NFC Central. They've gotten one of the top seven players out of each of the last five drafts, and their later rounds also have been well-reviewed. The players are there. It's hard to blame anything but the coaching for the Bucs' 43 losses in the last four years. Williamson gave himself a chance by hiring almost an entirely new staff, including coordinators Floyd Peters on defense and Hank Kuhlmann on offense.

Peters will install a 4-3 defense with stunting linemen who get upfield fast. He's liable to do for Keith McCants what he did for Minnesota's Chris Doleman, another fourth pick in the draft who was a mediocre linebacker before Peters moved him to end. Wayne Haddix is a Pro Bowl corner. At outside linebacker, underrated Kevin Murphy has been solid for years, and 1989 first-round pick Broderick Thomas is too young to give up on yet.

The offense gave up 53 sacks and ranked 19th in rushing yards last year, which doesn't say much for its blocking. But it has young, promising linemen and a true fullback now in rookie Robert Wilson. Wideouts Mark Carrier and Bruce Hill are above average, and tight end Ron Hall should be in a Pro Bowl soon.

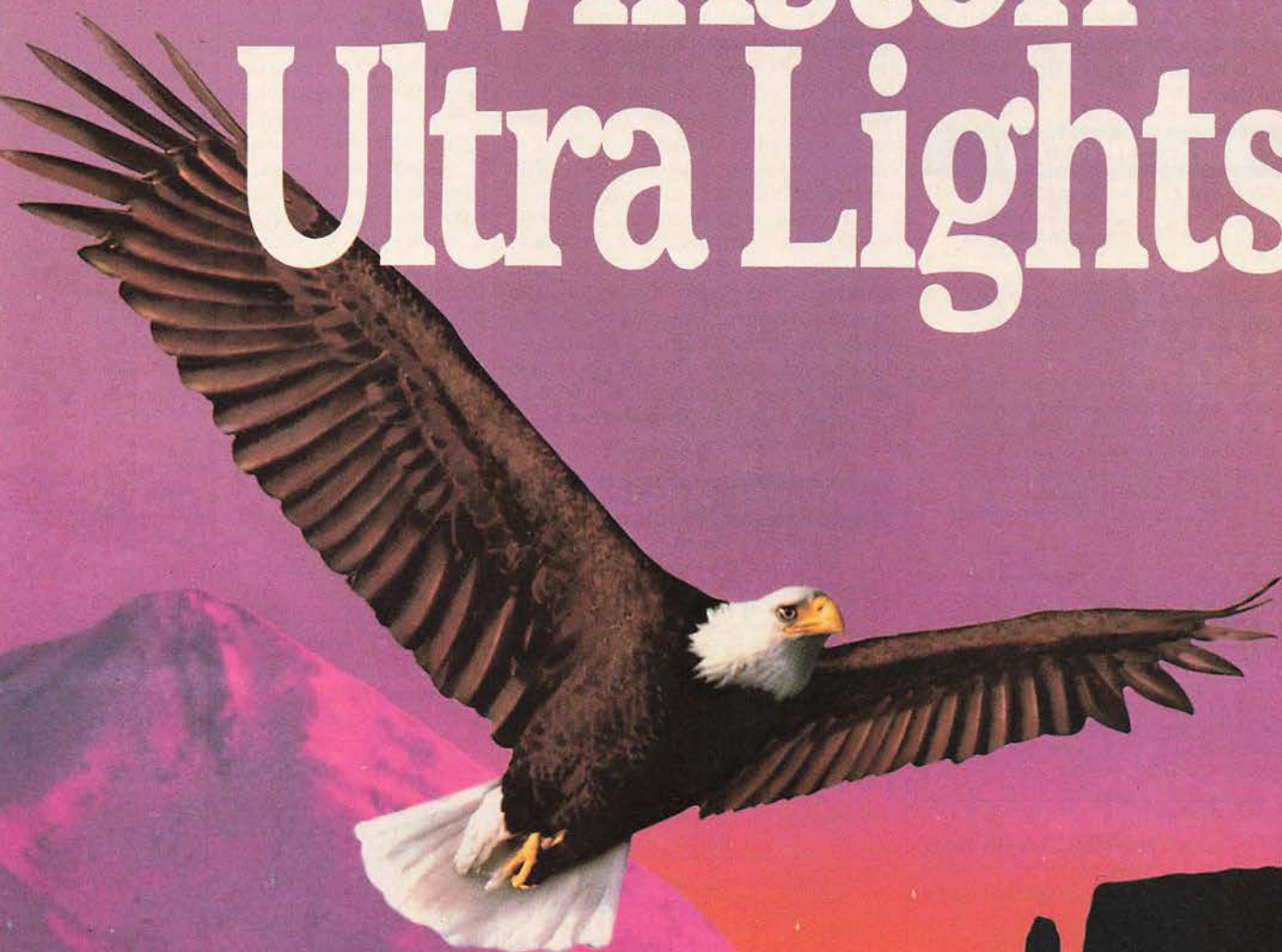
The big question is whether Vinny



With the cement shoes removed, Keith McCants and Tampa Bay should start to rise. Prediction: Second.

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Testaverde can be a championship quarterback. He's not getting any younger, but he can look to an encouraging example. Phil Simms also was disappointing until Perkins left the Giants.

This looks like a young, talented team at about the same stage as were the '87 Vikings. It could turn out to be overrated, as the Vikings did, but it also could wind up in a Super Bowl in two or three years.

BUCS FORECAST

WHY THEY'LL FINISH SECOND: The vast collection of good, young players finally has the coaching staff it deserves.

HOT DATE: December 14 at Chicago. Even if the Bucs seem to be for real through 14 games, they'll have to prove it against the Bears at frigid Soldier Field.

GET RID OF: Sacks and interceptions. Just moving forward, the Bucs ranked eighth last year in yards per pass. Factor in the sacks, and they ranked 19th. Pile the interceptions on top of that, at minus-50 yards apiece, and they ranked 24th.

GET: A fast safety and a full-time runner. Reggie Cobb might become the featured ballcarrier with his move to halfback.

EXTRA POINT: A fast start doesn't mean much for the Bucs. They were 3-1 and 4-2 last year before finishing 6-10. In the last four years, they've gone 10-9 (.526) in their first five games and 10-34 (.227) after that.

3

MINNESOTA VIKINGS

Most of the reasons the Herschel Walker trade was a bad idea have been well-chronicled. He cost too much. Run-

ning backs don't put contenders over the top. He was a power runner best suited for the I-formation, joining a split-backs team that featured finesse blocking. But maybe the biggest reason has been overlooked. Maybe the Cowboys knew Walker was already past his prime.

That's not only possible, it's likely. Before 1989, the year of the trade, Walker had 1,864 pro rushing attempts in two leagues. Earl Campbell, another big, fast power back, crashed from his prime after six years and 1,883 carries. Gerald Riggs declined last year after 1,788. For Roger Craig, Curt Warner and Freeman McNeil, the magic number was between 1,450 and 1,550. Even durable Walter Payton and Ottis Anderson slipped temporarily at around 1,600 carries before resuming their productivity with different running styles.

32 SPORT/SEPTEMBER 1991

Maybe Walker can make that adjustment too. Maybe the Vikings can help him. They promise to feature him and accommodate his abilities with one-back sets so that he can line up seven yards deep, as he prefers.

But Walker, besides being the Vikings' scapegoat where he was supposed to be their savior, could also be a symbol of the team's waning prime. Anthony Carter, Steve Jordan, Mike Merriweather, Carl Lee, Joey Browner and Wade Wilson are over 30. The best defensive player, tackle Keith Millard, is coming off serious knee surgery. The roster has little depth at any position.

The Vikings have been on the brink for four years. They've been a talented team that hasn't had the leadership and heart to win big games, or even little ones, outdoors. Now they're at the stage where the talent could fade before the intangibles arrive. They do have the NFL's easiest schedule, and they can't be ignored, but they could go 4-12 as easily as they could go 12-4.

VIKINGS FORECAST

WHY THEY'LL FINISH THIRD: They're still talented enough to be legitimate Super Bowl contenders, but that hasn't meant anything the last three years. Why should things change all of a sudden?

HOT DATE: November 17 at Green Bay. The Vikings are 2-4 against the Packers in the last three years. They're 1-11 outdoors the last two years, with the only victory coming in balmy Tampa. Aside from a Tampa game in December, this is their only road game after November 1. Five of their last seven are at home.

GET RID OF: The coach. Jerry Burns is a lovable guy who was a great offensive coordinator but hasn't been able to get the most out of this team as head coach. Buddy Ryan is hard to take, but whipping aging underachievers past the finish line is the thing he does best.

GET: A quarterback who's a leader. Maybe it's Wade Wilson. He's a good enough passer. But he's 32, and Burns has never let him feel he doesn't have to look over his shoulder.

EXTRA POINT: Emmitt Smith, a fraction of Dallas' haul in the Herschel Walker deal, ran for 167 more yards than Walker last year.

4

GREEN BAY PACKERS

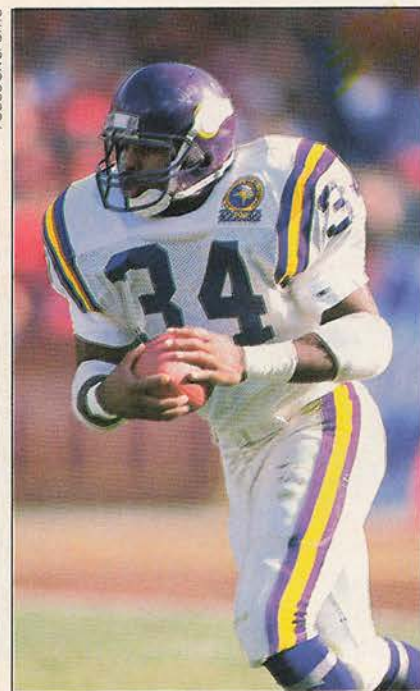
There can't be much doubt now that the Packers overestimated themselves after going 10-6 against the league's easiest schedule in 1989. Since then, the team couldn't have been managed much

worse if they'd randomly picked some guy out of the stands with a ski mask and an orange snowmobile suit.

They're one of the oldest teams, with two of the three starting defensive linemen and three of the four defensive backs over 30. But for the third year in a row, the Packers were one of the two busiest shoppers in the league's Plan B garage sale. Most of their Plan B menagerie has been siphoning roster spots and playing time from younger players who might have become starters by now.

Green Bay is the only NFL team that prohibits its ownership from making a profit, but the Packers still have a dozen or so holdouts more often than not. Thirteen starters missed training-camp time last year, including four offensive linemen. No wonder they allowed 62 sacks and ran for 66.3 yards per game, not including quarterbacks. Both numbers were worst in the league. The sacks and 85.6 total yards rushing per game were the worst in team history.

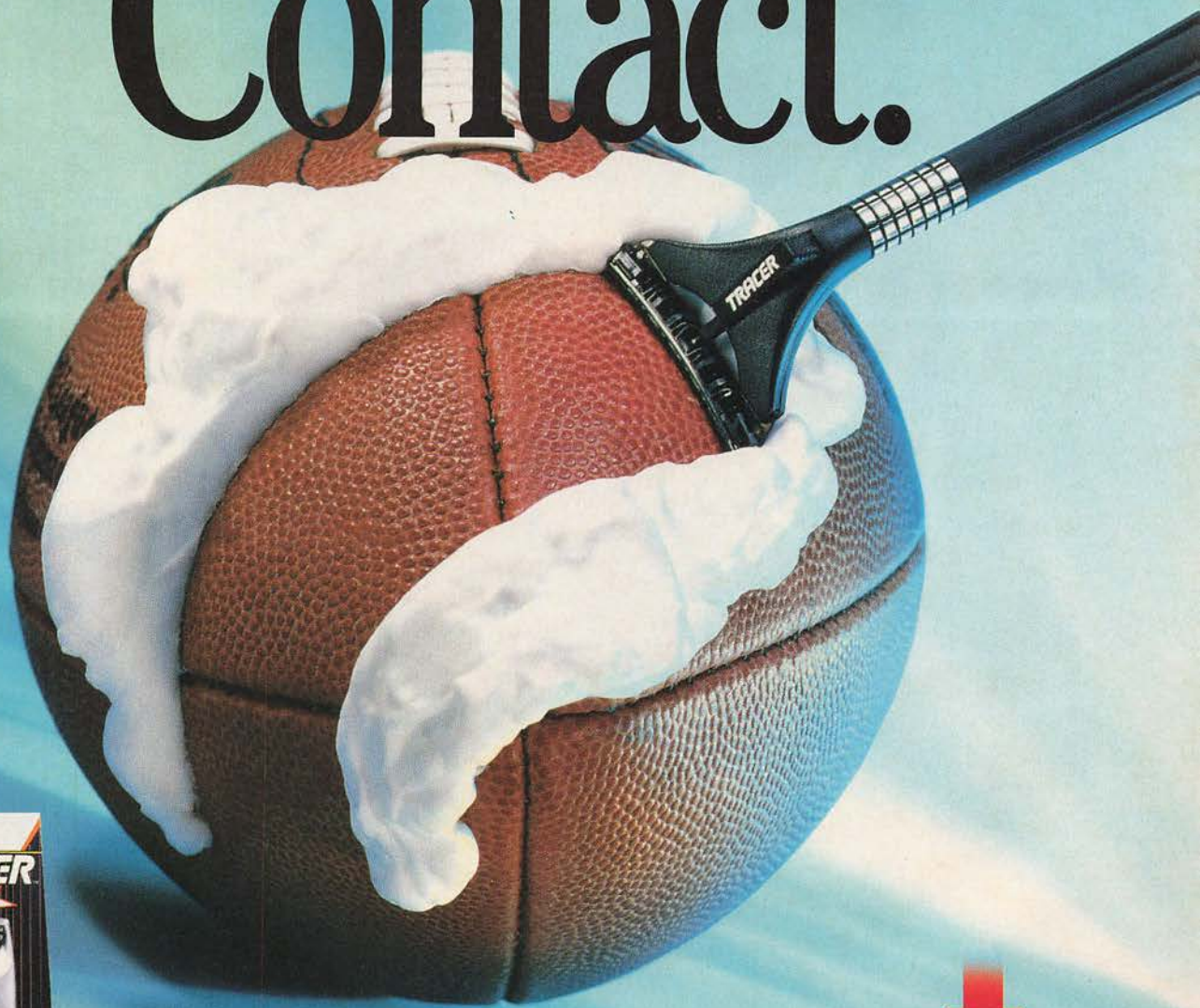
The flood of opposing pass rushers eventually tore the rotator cuff of quarterback Don Majkowski, the cornerstone of the franchise. He's optimistic about playing in September, but when Jim McMahon recovered ahead of schedule from a similar injury in 1987, he wasn't ready until October. The Packers signed ex-Bear Mike Tomczak to stand in for him, which makes sense unless it means they've given up on Anthony Dilweg after 193 NFL passes and expect Tomczak suddenly to become



Past his prime or ready to rumble? Herschel Walker needs to fulfill the Vikings' expectations. Prediction: Third.

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William Perry's presence still looms large in Chicago; he may have been the most improved player on the team last year. Prediction: First.

JON SOUL/GOBERNSTEIN & ASSOC.

the low-risk passer coach Lindy Infante prefers.

The Packers have laid some solid groundwork for the future. They hired a new contract negotiator, Mike Reinhardt. Second-year running back Darrell Thompson finished his rookie year promisingly. Infante still has the makings of a great coach. But the rebuilding process is still closer to the beginning than to the end.

PACKERS FORECAST

WHY THEY'LL FINISH FOURTH:

Detroit's in the same division. Otherwise, it's hard to be even that optimistic about a team that can't protect the passer, can't rush the passer, can't cover deep receivers and has a quarterback with a mending rotator cuff.

HOT DATE:

September 22 at Miami. In the last three years, Green Bay is 2-8 against AFC teams. It's as hard for northern teams to go south in September as it is for southern teams to go north in December, and the Packers are at the Rams the following week.

GET RID OF:

The notion that Plan B can carry a team past .500.

GET:

A pass rusher to divert blockers from Tim Harris, whose sacks fell from 19½ to seven. Second-year OLB Tony Bennett and third-year DE Matt Brock have shown promise.

EXTRA POINT:

Combining pass defense and pass offense, only Cleveland and New England were worse last year. In differentials, Green Bay ranked 26th in yards per pass play and last in sacks, giving up 35 more than they made.

5

DETROIT LIONS

It looks as if the Lions saw the bright lights of playoff contention approaching, mistook them for an oncoming train and scrambled out of triumph's way. This is a team that increased its offense by almost 100 yards and 10 points a game over the last three years. So when the time came to find solutions for the 6-10 disappointment of last season, where did they decide to perform surgery? On the offense. The Lions are not going to put all their eggs in the run 'n' shoot basket this season. They're going to bang it out with a tight end and two backs sometimes.

The Lions overreacted to one game, a 41-38 overtime loss to Washington in which they blew a 17-point lead in the fourth quarter. Coach Wayne Fontes talked about poor clock management

because Detroit didn't let Barry Sanders run the time away, and when the Lions wound up the season with nearly a minute per game less possession time than the next worst team, the run 'n' shoot became a scapegoat.

But let's be honest. Plenty of fourth-quarter leads have been blown because a team crawled into a hole and had three straight series of run-run-pass-punt. Houston and Atlanta, the other two run 'n' shoot teams, ranked sixth and eighth in possession time. The problem isn't Detroit's offense. The problem is it's hard to control the ball if the defense can't take it away.

The Lions gave up the most yards and first downs in the league last year. Their defense ranked 27th in rushing yards and 26th in points. The Lions' defense also ranked in the bottom 10 in points, total yards, rushing and passing. There are people who say, of course, they can't play defense with an offense that can't control the ball, but the Lions' defense ranked only 22nd in points per 30 minutes on the field. It was the defense that couldn't control the ball.

Things could get worse on offense. The next logical step to the Lions' thought process is putting Sanders behind a bunched-up offense and running him 22 times a game. It won't make better use of their best player. He's doing fine in a spread-out offense. What it will do is get their best player hurt. A better defense can give him about 17.5 carries a game, as he had as a rookie. It was roughly Marcus Allen's workload during

his first three years. Then Allen carried nearly 24 times a game in 1985, and he didn't average more than 3.8 yards a carry for a full year until last season.

LIONS FORECAST

WHY THEY'LL FINISH FIFTH:

Habit. The Lions are better than a fifth-place team on paper, but they're usually better on paper than they are in the standings. Tampa Bay won't be on the bottom to break their fall this year either.

HOT DATE:

October 6 against Minnesota at home. The Lions have won one of their last nine against the Vikings, none of the last five at home. Playing indoors should be a huge advantage for a run 'n' shoot team, but Detroit's 7-9 record at home in 1989 and '90 was just one game better than its road record.

GET RID OF: Any question about what type of defense to play. Coach Wayne Fontes has advocated bend-but-don't-break, and defensive coordinator Woody Widenhofer prefers a more aggressive unit. A team can win either way, but it can't win both ways.

GET: A big outside pass rusher.

EXTRA POINT: From 1988 to 1990, the Lions improved from 5.4 yards per pass attempt to 7.2, from 12.1 yards per completion to 13.8, from a team quarterback rating of 51.5 to 75.3, from 13 touchdown passes to 24, from 44.7 percent completions to 52.6, from 135 passing yards a game to 191, from 78 rushing yards a game to 120, and from 220 points to 373.

STEPHEN DUNN/ALLSPORT USA



Perry Kemp had a hard time getting passes from the oft-sacked Green Bay quarterback in '90. The veteran Packers need young blood. Prediction: Fourth.

NFC EAST

THE SUPER BOWL CHAMPS WILL GET SKINNED

1

WASHINGTON REDSKINS

As the Redskins are painfully aware, the Giants have set the standard for the NFC East, if not the whole NFC. But what if a team could be as physically punishing as the Giants, control the ball with a low-risk offense and still score 30 points with its big-play passing? If that team exists in the NFC, it's the Redskins.

Their offense actually spent more time on the field than New York's the last two years despite less help from the defense. It shortened the pass plays last year without much sacrifice in scoring.

It's still unclear whether Mark Rypien is the right quarterback for a low-risk offense, but his two-year interception rate is almost the same as Joe Montana's was last year. Rypien's picks just seem to come at more costly times. Washington is 13-4 in Rypien's last 17 starts though, and this is only his fourth active season, the time when many erratic quarterbacks become more consistently spectacular.

The whole Redskins team was up and down a year ago, losing late games to the Colts and Cowboys but beating the Bears, Dolphins and Bills. Both lines are still young, so they might be a year away. But if they can find two run-stuffing tackles among Tim Johnson, Eric Williams, Tracy Rocker and aging Darryl Grant, they can bump chests with the Giants and stay on their feet. Matt Millen should shore up the middle linebacking, and the young defensive backs came a long way last year.

Even last year, when the defense ranked 14th in yards allowed and 13th in points, it did a lot of things well. Washington tied for fourth in sacks with only 7½ from leader Fred Stokes. It was in the top 10 in interceptions, yards per pass, rushing yards and touchdown runs. It just gave up too many big plays. Cut those down, and Washington can go back to the Big Game.

REDSKINS FORECAST

WHY THEY'LL FINISH FIRST: Joe Gibbs always has been able to outcoach his opponents. Now he has the young linemen on both sides of the ball who can outplay them too.

HOT DATE: October 27 at New York against the Giants. Washington has lost its last six games to the Giants. In 1989 and '90, the Redskins were effectively out of the division race after playing New York twice in the first seven weeks. This year, they don't face off until the eighth game, after a week off.

GET RID OF: That inferiority complex when it comes to the Giants. Last year, Washington outplayed them at least once, maybe twice, without winning.

GET: Fred Stokes on the field more. In 1989 and '90, the fifth-year defensive end had 10½ sacks, five forced fumbles and six recoveries in less than a full season's playing time.

EXTRA POINT: The erratic 1990 Redskins scored more than 24 points eight times, but 14 or fewer five times. On the bright side, they won two of the low-scoring games.

2

NEW YORK GIANTS

The only team to win a second straight Super Bowl since 1979 did it with a new coach, but there are three big differences between Ray Handley's '91 Giants and George Seifert's '89 Niners. First, Handley is replacing a popular coach. While the 49ers respected Bill Walsh, the Giants players really liked Bill Parcells. He talked to the players. He knew them. He knew how to get the most out of them. That knowledge, gained over eight years, might have been worth three games last season.

Second, Handley, an offensive coach, also lost former defensive coordinator Bill Belichick. Seifert didn't have that problem.

Finally, Handley's bailiwick has been the running game. There's a danger he'll believe what people have said, that the Giants won because they trampled people with the running game. They didn't.

They trampled people. That much is true. Few teams can stand up to the Gi-



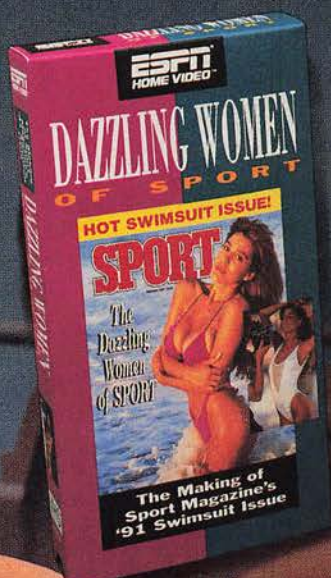
Lawrence Taylor can still do his thing, especially when the Giants force the action outside. Prediction: Second.

ants' pounding on offense and defense. But they won because Parcells wasn't afraid to take chances. His goal was keeping the ball on offense as long as possible. To do that, he had to keep the offense in the game on fourth-and-short and pass fairly often on first down, when the risks are lower than they are on third down. Handley might have that much nerve too, but few coaches do, especially few first-year coaches. The defense is the key to the Giants, of course, and Lawrence Taylor no longer lockers in a phone booth. That's a concern.

But what makes the Giants' defense so impenetrable is the five middle players. They force the action outside where Taylor and the others can make big plays. At nose tackle, inside backer and safety, the Giants are young and strong. They won't slip far.

JON SOO HOO/BERNSTEIN & ASSOC.

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TOM DIPACE

Keith Byars and the other Philadelphia running backs must ease Randall Cunningham's burden for the Eagles to contend. Prediction: Third.

GIANTS FORECAST

WHY THEY'LL FINISH SECOND: They have key coaching changes, and the offense probably isn't going to have another year with five interceptions and nine lost fumbles. The Giants withstood a lot of early injuries on defense last year because they rarely made the defense take the field less than 70 yards from their goal line.

HOT DATE: December 8 at home against Philadelphia. The Giants are 1-5 against the Eagles since '88, and this is their only home game in a four-week run down the stretch.

GET RID OF: A quarterback controversy before it starts. There's no rule that says the job is Phil Simms' because he lost it to an injury, and there's no rule that says it's Jeff Hostetler's because he won the Super Bowl. Early in camp Simms will establish whether he is or isn't still better than Hostetler, and the decision should be announced promptly.

GET: Maurice Carthon or rookie Jarrod Bunch in at fullback or H-back more often to pick up the blocking slack for the probable loss of Mark Bavaro.

EXTRA POINT: A team can control the ball a long time with a measly 3.8 yards per rush if its offense gains 6.5 yards per pass play and its defense allows 5.2. That, plus the second-best turnover ratio, was the Giants' 1990 season in a nutshell.

PHILADELPHIA EAGLES

3

Buddy Ryan is a tough act to follow. The Eagles' former coach instilled not only a fierce loyalty in his players but also a strong dependence, a genuine feeling that their strength came from the magic position of his defensive system. New coach Rich Kotite and his defensive coordinator, Bud Carson, will have to plow through those high weeds to gain the players' attention, let alone rebuild their confidence.

One thing will make the new coaches' sales job easier though. It is the Eagles' 0-3 playoff record the last three years. Quarterback Randall Cunningham and defensive end Reggie White might be the best offensive and defensive players in football. They're the kind of players you might pick if you had your choice of one player for one big game. But last year, while the Eagles scored fewer than 20 points only twice in the regular season, they managed just six in their one big playoff game.

The defense also had an obvious soft spot for big plays in the last three years. It ranked in the top 10 in sacks and rushing yards allowed all three years, but it also was no better than 20th in touchdown passes and 25th in yards per completion. Carson will no doubt trade a few sacks for some 40-

yard pass plays.

Kotite already has won the players over with his offense, which was new to the Eagles last year. Throwing more high-percentage passes, Cunningham had his first great passing season and trailed only Warren Moon with 30 TD passes. The problem is he's expected to carry the running game too. The Eagles led the league in rushing, but subtracting Cunningham's runs, they ranked 19th in average gain and 20th in yards. Only four teams ran for fewer touchdowns.

This isn't an old team yet. Only one starter is over 30. But most teams take a stutter step when they change coaches, and few teams stay on the playoff fringes more than four years. If they aren't playing for the conference championship by next season, the Eagles probably won't be getting the chance to lose playoff games.

EAGLES FORECAST

WHY THEY'LL FINISH THIRD: Their front-line players are as good as the Giants' and Redskins' starters, but they don't have as much depth and don't have the running game to balance the offense.

HOT DATE: September 30 at Washington. Since 1988, the Eagles are 2-4 against Washington and 4-8 in their first four games. This is the fifth game.

GET RID OF: The silly penalties. A team can play aggressively without ranking last in penalty-yardage differential.

GET: Younger and better reserves. Buddy Ryan's preference for veterans has left the bench weak and the kicking teams beatable.

EXTRA POINT: Despite ranking 12th in points allowed, the 1990 Eagles were 2-5 when they scored 20 to 23 points. That's the sign of either an offense that can't protect the ball with a lead or a defense that gives up just enough to lose.

DALLAS COWBOYS

4

Jimmy Johnson has the right attitude. Leaping halfway to the top of the NFC East didn't impress the Cowboys' coach any more than jumping halfway from one skyscraper roof to another.

He has the right patience too. He's building his team methodically, primarily through the draft but not exclusively. He has assembled a team without any glaring position weaknesses except middle linebacker, and while it also has no standout strengths, it has half a dozen players capable of creating them. He knows stars win championships, but he also knows stars don't

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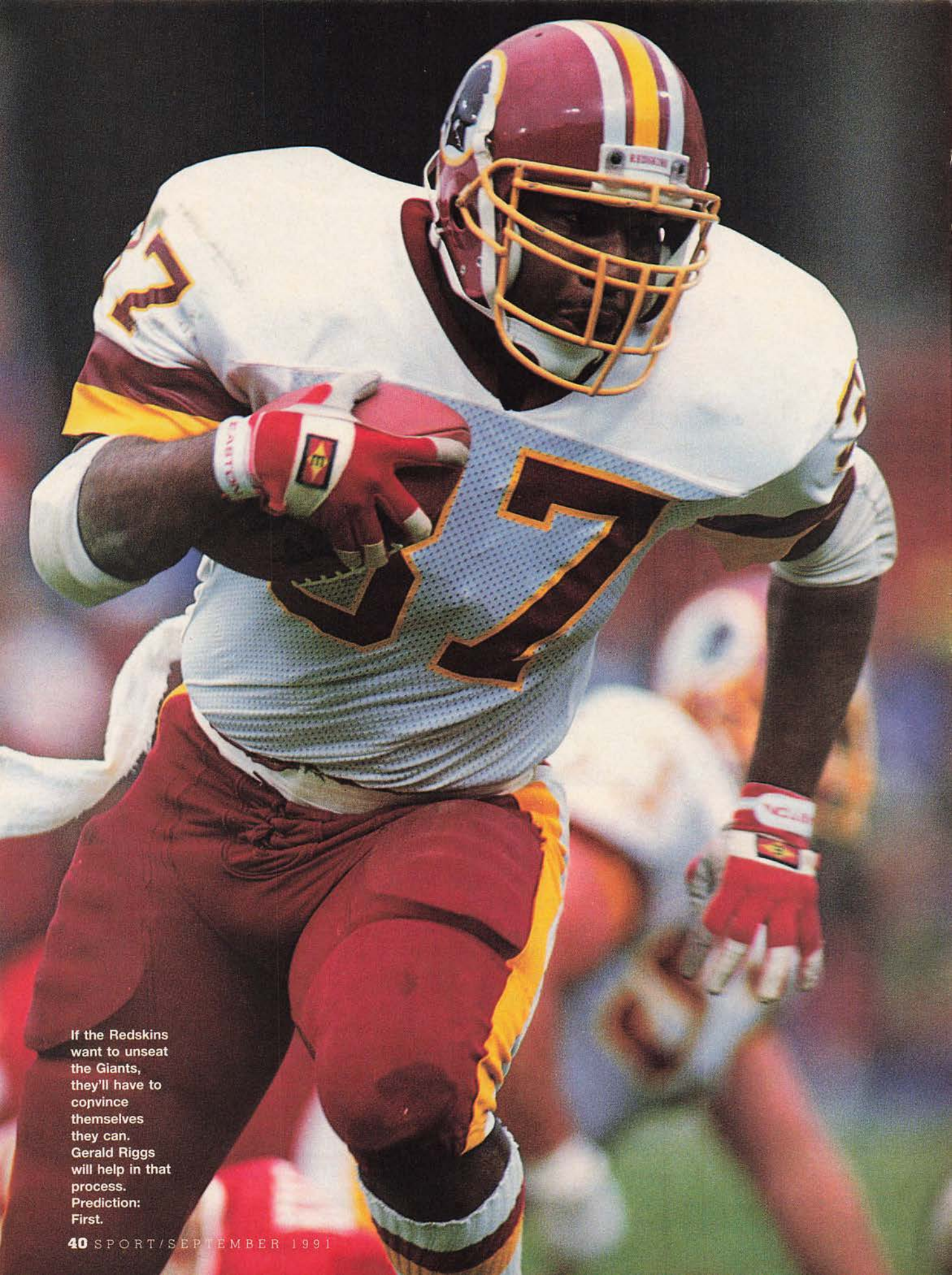
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If the Redskins want to unseat the Giants, they'll have to convince themselves they can. Gerald Riggs will help in that process. Prediction: First.

shine without a couple years of polishing.

What Johnson doesn't have yet is the right offense for his division. The three playoff teams' defenses all ranked in the top six last year in touchdown runs allowed and in the top eight in rushing yards allowed. So NFC East winners must pass well. Dallas' 1990 passing game ranked last in the league in touchdowns, interceptions, team passer rating and first downs per pass attempt.

The quarterback, Troy Aikman, is one of those players who's liable to be a star someday. So is rookie wideout Alvin Harper and maybe even second-year burner Alexander Wright, who wasted his rookie year with a holdout. Without those receivers, Aikman had a Pro Bowl-level 92.1 rating in the four games before his injury, and Dallas soared from 3-7 to 7-7. But the Cowboys scored more than 17 points only once in their 12 other games, so only an optimist would mark Aikman down for a whole season in the 90s this year.

Johnson's best coaching has been in his defensive specialty. With only cornerback Issiac Holt deserving Pro Bowl consideration, the defense ranked behind only Pittsburgh last year in yards per pass play and touchdown passes. Eleven times, the Cowboys held teams to 21 points or less, and it will get better as its young players do. The trick will be scoring 21 points or more.

COWBOYS FORECAST

WHY THEY'LL FINISH FOURTH: The offense is too young and too erratic to charge through this minefield of a division.

HOT DATE: September 9 against Washington at home. The Redskins will remember their Thanksgiving loss at Dallas last year. The Cowboys will be starting a four-game stretch against the whole NFC East during which they can prove they really aren't a year away.

GET RID OF: High expectations after a near-playoff season in '90. The Cowboys won't improve by six games again. They might not improve their win total at all, but they'll be a better team.

GET: A veteran back-up quarterback who gives the team a chance to win. The season ended with Troy Aikman's injury last year, and quarterbacks' shoulder injuries don't always mend as cleanly as the objects in glue commercials.

EXTRA POINT: The Cowboys' rebuilding plan has been nearly impeccable, but there is one nit to pick. They didn't draft an outstanding offensive lineman early. Offensive linemen need the longest incubation period, but the Cowboys have only one of them from the 1989 and '90 drafts, and none from their first two rounds of any draft.

BRUCE L. SCHWARTZMAN



Troy Aikman is one of the Cowboys' young players who's liable to become a star and lift Dallas into serious contention in the near future. Prediction: Fourth.

5

PHOENIX CARDINALS

The way the Giants won the Super Bowl, a lot of teams will be leaping to the hazardous conclusion

that the way to win is to save the passing game only for special occasions, like heirloom china. Phoenix is probably the only NFL team for which that thinking makes some sense.

The Cardinals' defense is just plain bad. It has four or five players who could help a contender, and the others are too small, too slow or both. Phoenix also has a young quarterback who throws too many interceptions, which makes a bad defense look worse. It has an offensive line that blocks better on runs than on passes, and it has two fine runners in Johnny Johnson and Anthony Thompson.

What Johnson and Thompson can do is take pressure off both the defense and the quarterback by running time off the clock and yards off the field. They shouldn't run on first down much more than half the time, or defenses will put big welcoming committees at the line and pick off a bunch of third-and-eight interceptions. But they should be the foundation of the team.

Coach Joe Bugel has toyed with playing both backs at once, but he is really a one-back coach, and it's easier to find blocking H-backs than feature runners. Alternating Johnson and Thompson would keep them both fresh over a season and prolong their careers. If the strategy works, there should

be enough carries to get them both around 1,000 yards.

The point is to buy a year for the defense, which drafted long-range lineman projects in the first two rounds, and promising quarterback Timm Rosenbach, a one-year starter. ★

CARDINALS FORECAST

WHY THEY'LL FINISH FIFTH: In the league's strongest division, they're the only team without a reliable defense. They could be third in most divisions, but there's no room above them in the NFC East.

HOT DATE: September 15 at Washington, the third straight road game to open '91.

The Cards were within a field goal of beating the Giants twice, and they beat the Eagles and Cowboys last year. But they never came close to beating coach Joe Bugel's old team.

GET RID OF: The long-running Defense of the Month program. Shifting to a 3-4 isn't what most teams are doing, but now that the Cardinals have committed to it with their coaching changes and draft picks, they should give it a serious shot.

GET: More speed on defense. Too many defensive backs need roller skates to keep up with receivers.

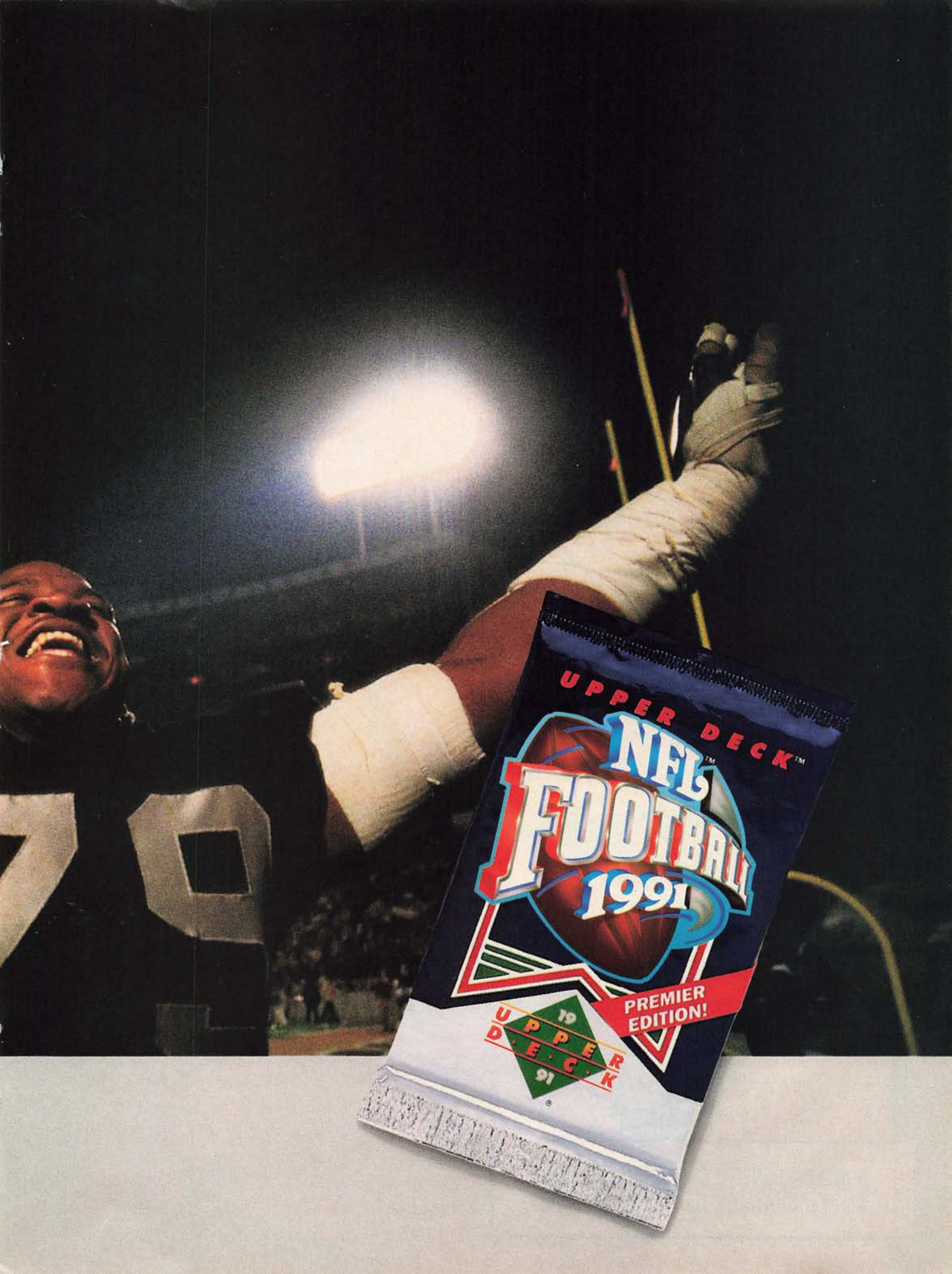
EXTRA POINT: Last year's defense didn't stop the short pass (27th in first downs per pass attempt) or the long pass (23rd in yards per completion). It ranked in the bottom five in yards per pass play, opponents' passer rating, and touchdown runs and touchdown passes allowed.

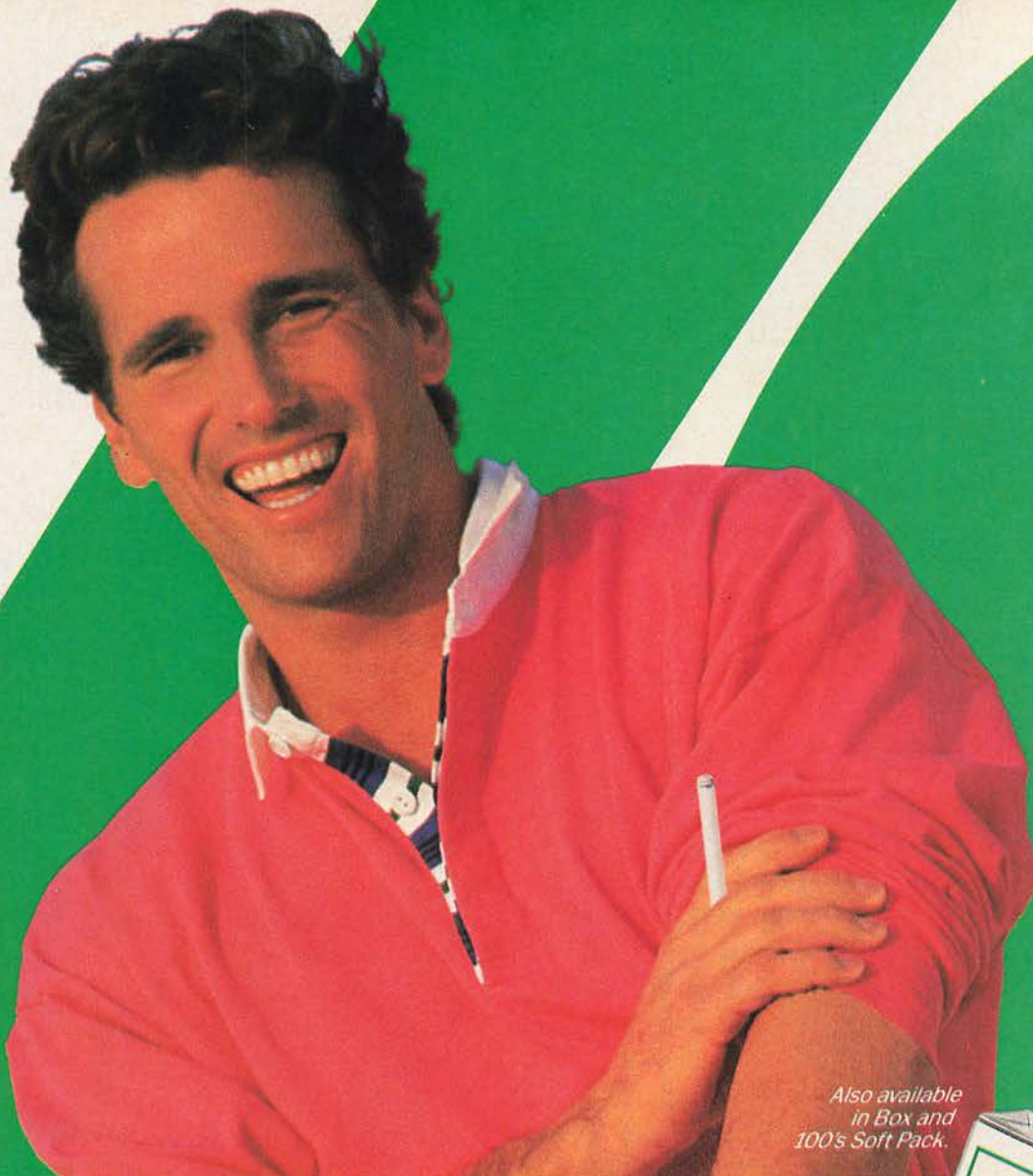
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AFC WEST

THE RAIDERS WILL WIN THE SHELL GAME

1

LOS ANGELES RAIDERS

After being out of football two of the previous four years, Ethan Horton responded to his last-chance offer from Al Davis with what many considered to be a Pro Bowl 1990 season at tight end. The former running back took well to his new position, catching 33 passes for 404 yards, a 12.2-yards-per-catch average. He scored three touchdowns. "Ethan played good, hard-nosed football," says head coach Art Shell. "When we called on him, he responded."

Horton's success was proof that Shell had returned two key ingredients to the always-talented Raiders: pride and poise, the two buzz words that brought Los Angeles so much success through the 1980s. Shell, in just two years, has clearly left his imprint on this team: A punishing running game (Marcus Allen, Bo Jackson and Greg Bell combined for 1,544 rushing yards and 18 rushing touchdowns), a downfield passing game and a hell-to-pay defense. The defense will continue to benefit from the emergence of defensive end Greg Townsend (12.5 sacks), who has evolved from strictly a pass rusher to an every-down, Pro Bowl player.

The Raiders, of course, aren't counting on any Bo miracles this time around, but between the mercurial Allen, Plan B signee Roger Craig and Bell, they should be able to run the ball. Their receivers are topnotch too. With the swagger and the big crowds back, the Super Bowl might not be far behind.

ALLEN/DEAN STEELE



Bruising running back Christian Okoye certainly will bring the Chiefs value—either in a trade or in a tough division race. Prediction: Second.

RAIDERS FORECAST

WHY THEY'LL FINISH FIRST: The division's top talent helps. But the reinstillation of the bad-is-better attitude has returned the Raiders to rebel status.

HOT DATE: September 22 vs. the Atlanta Falcons. Black on black in the battle of the nasties. This will be a TV match-up born in hell, truly Madden-ing.

GET RID OF: Jay "Mr. Hyde" Schroeder, but keep Jay "Dr. Jekyll" Schroeder. Dr. Jekyll's 1990 statistical comeback was a big reason the Raiders nabbed the division at 12-4. But when the season came down to the passing game in the playoffs, Mr. Hyde took over: five interceptions, virtually no offense and a 51-3 loss to Buffalo in the AFC title game.

GET: Another promising tailback. Bo Jackson never has been a full-time player and will unlikely be part-time in 1991. Marcus Allen, who continues his consistent brilliance, is limited in the longevity department. So is Roger Craig.

EXTRA POINT: The Raiders finished the year with five straight wins to finish 12-4, evidence of Shell's ability to motivate his team in the clutch. "Success to me is winning the Super Bowl," says Shell. "So this, to me, is not success."

2

KANSAS CITY CHIEFS

Someone has to say it: The best running back in Kansas City isn't Christian Okoye. It's former free-agent Barry Word, who shocked critics by busting loose for a team-leading 1,015 yards, including a club-record 200-yard effort against Detroit. He averaged five yards a carry and scored four times in '90.

More surprising, perhaps, Word proved more durable than the punishing—but injury-prone—Okoye. Now Word is looking at a probable starting role in 1991, while Okoye is looking at a possible trade. What makes the whole thing remarkable is that when Word signed with Kansas City in May of 1990, he was working for a long-distance phone company, two years out of football and not much less than that out of prison. But the long-shot gamble by head coach Marty Schottenheimer paid big dividends.

"Barry knew that the road ahead of him would be a tough one," the coach says. "And he has come through. He's lived up to everything we've asked him to do, both on and off the field."

Word was another of Schottenheimer's success stories on the way to

turning Kansas City into an AFC West powerhouse. A heartbreaking, last-second loss to Seattle ultimately cost the Chiefs a division title. And had Dan Marino not pulled out a 17-16 miracle in the playoffs, Kansas City would've had its first postseason win since Super Bowl IV.

Schottenheimer has compiled a list of success stories, such as Derrick Thomas' emergence as the top pass-rushing linebacker in the NFL, Steve DeBerg's well-honed professionalism, and a one-back-at-a-time attack that frustrates defenses. If rookie Harvey Williams can use his speed and size at running back, and if Mark Vlasic (over from San Diego) is the sleeper many think he is, Schottenheimer will have another success story: depth at where he's strongest.

CHIEFS FORECAST

WHY THEY'LL FINISH SECOND: It can't be long until age takes its toll in the secondary, which surrendered 219 yards a game last year. Deron Cherry will be 32 in September, Albert Lewis is 31, and Lloyd Burruss is 33. That could be the Achilles' heel that will let the Raiders sneak by them, but the Chiefs should be in the running for the division title through the season's final week.

HOT DATE: December 14 against the 49ers. A Super Bowl preview? Could be.

GET RID OF: Back-up quarterback Mike Elkins, who once seemed promising. The Chiefs loaned Elkins to Sacramento of the World League, where Chiefs GM Carl Peterson thought he would blossom. Elkins didn't. The Chiefs would do better in their search for DeBerg age insurance with Vlasic, who was ignored in San Diego.

GET: A lot in return for whatever bull back is traded. Either Okoye or Word should bring the kind of prime-time defensive back needed and perhaps a hot young quarterback.

EXTRA POINT: With Okoye, Word and now Williams getting all the attention, it might be time to remind one and all that running back Todd McNair caught 40 passes for 507 yards.

3

DENVER BRONCOS

Free safety Steve Atwater made his first Pro Bowl in 1990, finishing second on the team with 173 tackles and playing some of the most physical football ever seen in the Denver secondary. Atwater missed playing time due to injuries for the first time in his brief two-year career, but the time he spent on the field made up for any time he missed.

"I can't say enough about Steve's

contributions to our football team," says head coach Dan Reeves. Atwater was one of the few bright spots in a secondary that surrendered 22 touchdown passes to opposing quarterbacks and sorely missed cornerback Tyrone Braxton, who suffered a season-ending knee injury.

All those first-place finishes in the '80s have exacted a toll on the Broncos. For several years, the Broncos drafted late and then went out and played a first-place schedule. The result is an aging, beat-up football team that lacks the talent it's used to and the depth it needs. But things aren't as bad as they could be; Denver lost two games by one point, and two more by three. Perhaps renovation, not reconstruction, is in order.

That renovation could start with hard-hitting rookie linebackers Mike Croel and Keith Traylor. Croel, the fourth player chosen in the draft out of Nebraska, should make an impact right away and rejuvenate Karl Mecklenburg.

BRONCOS FORECAST

WHY THEY'LL FINISH THIRD: Head coach Dan Reeves is a granite presence and a proven winner. Until 1990, he had never lost more than eight NFL games in a season over a 25-year span as a player, assistant coach and head coach. He'll find a way to get this team respectable again.

HOT DATE: September 8 against the Raiders. The best thing about a bad 1990 is an easy 1991 schedule. Here's a not-so-easy week in the schedule that will give the Broncos a chance to show early on what they're made of.

GET RID OF: The mental baggage of Super Bowl losses. We're way past that now, and the Broncos need to concentrate on winning football games, one by one.

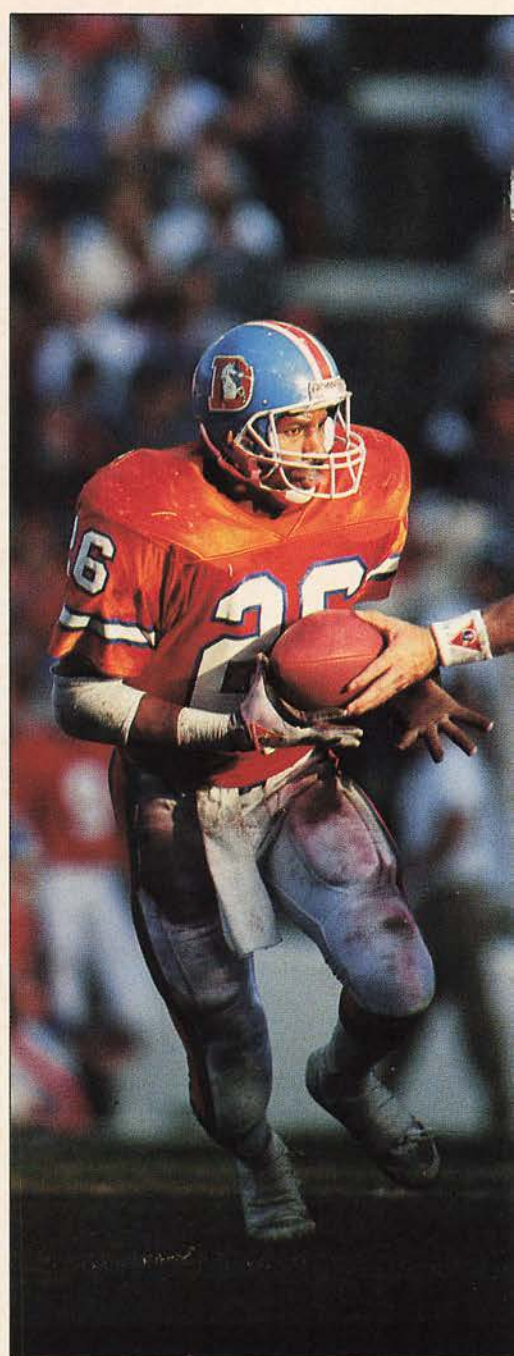
GET: Secondary help. Fast. Steve Atwater is piloting a sinking ship that includes 10-year veteran Dennis Smith, Braxton, who is iffy coming off knee surgery, Wymon Henderson, a one-time Plan B free agent, and inexperienced but talented Alton Montgomery.

EXTRA POINT: Had RB Bobby Humphrey not suffered a sprained ankle, which left him slowed through a number of subsequent games, he surely would've surpassed 1,500 yards rushing. As it was, he tallied 1,202, including four 100-yard games.

4

SAN DIEGO CHARGERS

We don't get it. The Chargers have veteran Pro Bowl talent at linebacker, defensive line, corner, wide receiver and running

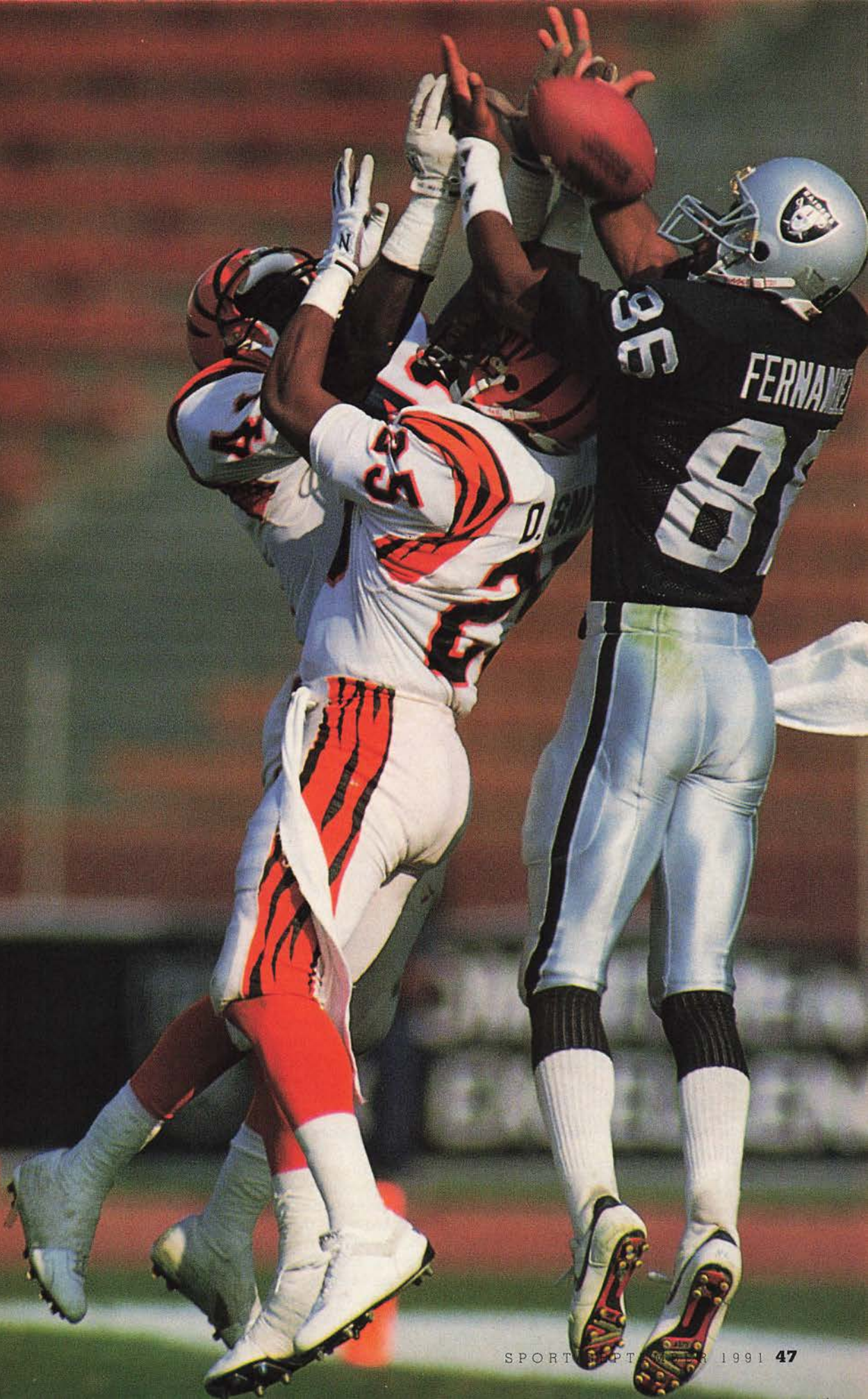


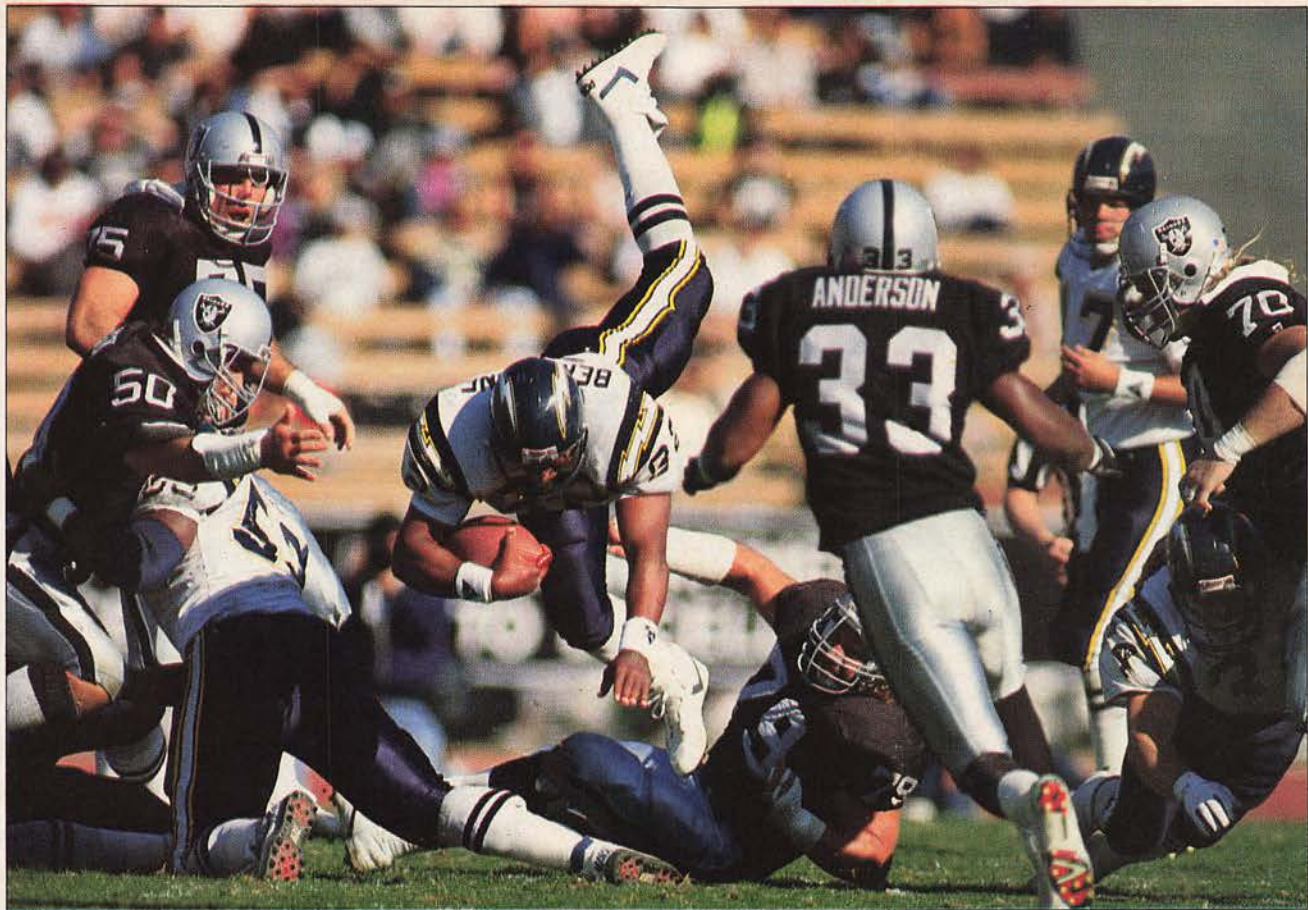
A healthy Bobby Humphrey will help Dan Reeves get his Broncos back in the hunt. Prediction: Third.

back, and youth at quarterback and offensive line, yet they continue to lose. With respect to the late George Allen, Dan Henning's future is now. Or never.

Henning definitely blew one game with a fake-punt call (Dallas), and his instability cost San Diego several more. The Chargers are stocked with potential stars; it's time they stand up and be counted. Get this: San Diego had the AFC's No. 1 rushing offense and No. 1 rushing defense. With production like that, you have to work at losing. Alex Spanos, are you listening?

Mervyn
Fernandez
gives the
Raiders speed,
moves, smarts
and a nose for
the ball.
Prediction:
First.





MIKE POWELL/ALLSPORT USA

Like tight end Rod Bernstein driving through a swarm of Raiders, the Chargers seem close to breaking through, but they invariably stumble. Prediction: Fourth.

CHARGERS FORECAST

WHY THEY'LL FINISH FOURTH: The Chargers haven't gelled as a team since they started collecting talent a few years ago, and it's hard to see how Bobby Beathard is going to find the glue this year. A lot depends on the development of talented, yet-unarrived quarterback Billy Joe Tolliver, who'll be pushed by journeyman Bob Gagliano and the other young QB, John Friesz.

HOT DATE: September 8 against San Francisco. Will the Chargers concede to the 49ers or indicate they have what it takes to make the playoffs?

GET RID OF: Head coach Dan Henning. He is 34-61-1 as an NFL head coach, with six losing seasons.

GET: Run 'n' shoot guru Darrel "Mouse" Davis for coach. With Tolliver, Pro Bowl wideout Anthony Miller and 1,000-yard big-back Marion Butts, San Diego would score points reminiscent of the Dan Fouts era. Davis shaped Detroit's mediocre personnel into the NFL's fifth-best scoring offense in 1990; San Diego needs an infusion of pizzazz.

EXTRA POINT: Linebacker/defensive lineman Leslie O'Neal continued his furious return from what was once feared a career-ending knee injury, finishing third in the AFC with 13.5 sacks.

5

SEATTLE SEAHAWKS

Just about everything positive about the Seahawks in 1990 could be attributed to the defense, led by defensive coordinator Tom Catlin. Catlin converted the Seahawks from the 3-4 to the 4-3, and the experiment was a raging success despite suffering incredible strings of injuries—three linebackers went down in one five-game stretch. Amazingly, the Seahawks allowed just seven rushing touchdowns in 1990; over the last 10 games, Seattle gave up just 16 points a game.

Head coach Chuck Knox rightfully credited Catlin "with the finest coaching job of his career." But there was little praise for the 21st-ranked offense, which should have scored enough points to put the 9-7 Seahawks in the playoffs. But Dave Krieg threw 20 interceptions and only 15 touchdowns, and four of his fumbles went for touchdowns by the opposition.

Seattle somehow won nine of its last 13 games and beat three playoff teams—Kansas City, Cincinnati and Houston. Smart money says the Seahawks won't be so lucky in 1991: Three Seattle victories were decided on the last play. Live by the sword, die by the sword.

SEAHAWKS FORECAST

WHY THEY'LL FINISH FIFTH: Chuck Knox is running out of miracles. For this team to repeat last year's 9-7 season, "a lot of fading veterans would have to play their asses off," says a smiling AFC assistant coach. Still, says Knox, "I have a burning desire in my gut to win." By December, Chuck, you'll have a burning headache.

HOT DATE: December 15 against Atlanta. Ground Chuck vs. last season's third-ranked run defense.

GET RID OF: Back-up QB Kelly Stouffer. The former first-round pick (by Phoenix, then traded to Seattle in 1988) was only active in one game in his third NFL season. The presence of 1991 first-round pick Dan McGwire indicates a short future for Stouffer in Seattle.

GET: We'll stick to the obvious. Seattle needs at least another consistent defensive back, at least two consistent linebackers and at least one more steady receiver.

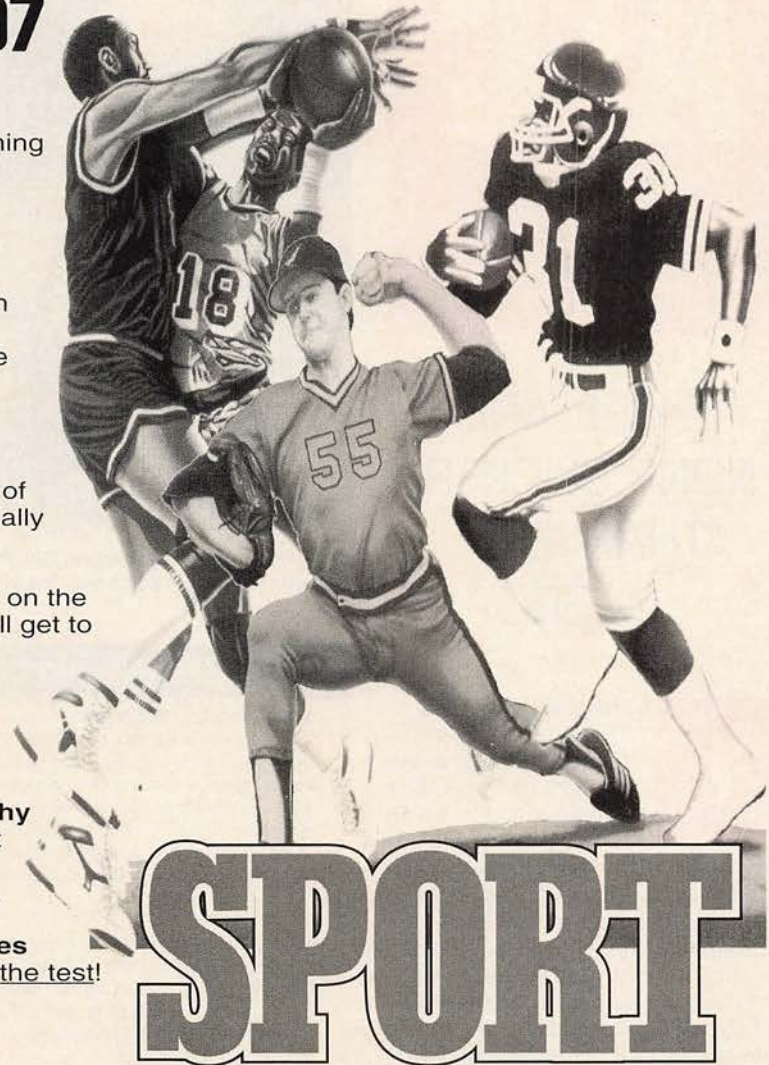
EXTRA POINT: The fact that John L. Williams couldn't get into the Pro Bowl until a replacement was needed for Bo Jackson is a travesty. Williams caught 73 passes and racked up 1,413 total yards from scrimmage—second in the AFC. He piled up 699 receiving yards and rushed for another 714 yards.

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AFC CENTRAL

THERE ARE NONE SLICKER THAN THE OILERS

1

HOUSTON OILERS

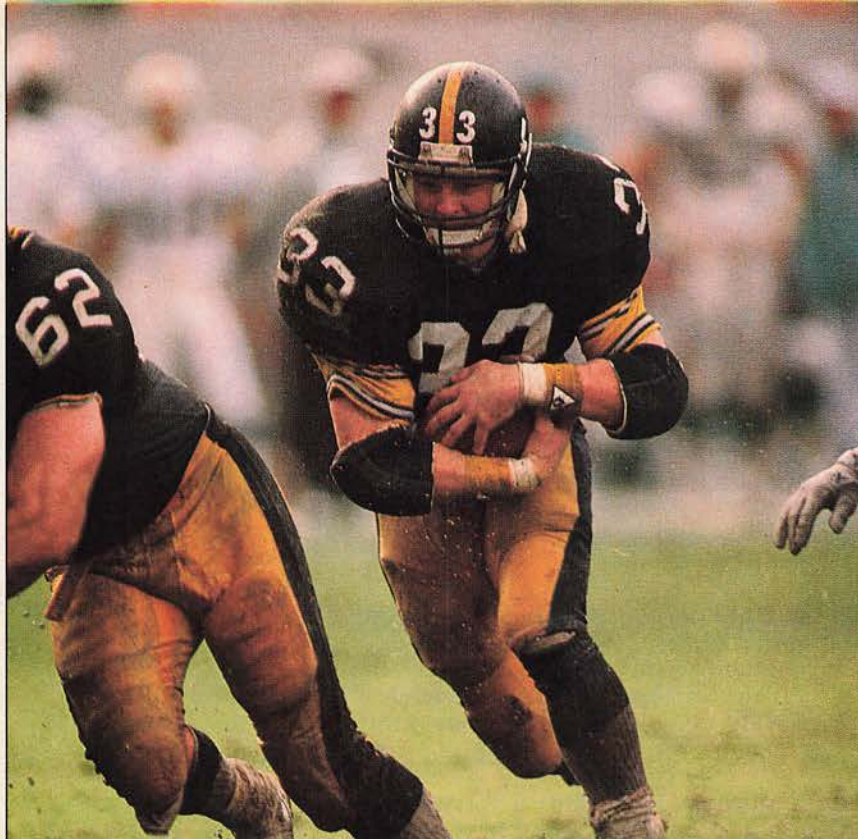
The run 'n' shoot offense counts on its receivers to free-lance their way into open passing lanes, and nobody does it better than Houston wide-out Haywood Jeffires. Jeffires, blessed with 4.47 speed, has developed a unique mental rapport with quarterback Warren Moon, and together they're damn near unstoppable. Jeffires' 1,019 yards led AFC receivers in 1990, and he finished '90 with a 14.2-yards-per-catch average and eight touchdowns.

Jeffires is in good company; of the AFC's leading receivers, four of the first seven were Oilers. Drew Hill reeled in 1,019 yards, Ernest Givins 979, and Curtis Duncan 785. Then there's the amazing Moon, who has thrown for more than 20,000 yards in two different leagues. The Oilers' offense ranked first in almost every offensive statistic and averaged a league-high 6.18 yards per play.

But the Oilers will be looking to improve their execution this year. In fact, they must if they want to take this division. As potent as the offense was in 1990, it failed to score a touchdown on 28 of 60 trips inside opponents' 20-yard lines. That's pretty much a direct result of Houston's six turnovers in scoring position, not to mention at least that many dropped passes.

50 SPORT/SEPTEMBER 1991

TOM DIPACE



With a questionable passing game, the Steelers look to Merrill Hoge to run them into contention. Prediction: Second.

OILERS FORECAST

WHY THEY'LL FINISH FIRST: Under coach Jack Pardee, the Oilers improved on the stat sheet but not in the standings, a fact that will change in 1991. This team is talented, deep and explosive. More consistency from the running backs and secondary could give them a chance at a serious Super Bowl run.

HOT DATE: September 8 at Cincinnati. Here's a Sunday-night, nationally televised game that features two teams that don't like each other and will contend for home-field advantage in the playoffs.

GET RID OF: Cris Dishman's taunting. Here's a guy who's blessed with speed, toughness and intelligence. It's a lack of common sense, not ability, that keeps Dishman in the doghouse.

GET: More depth in the secondary. The Oilers DBs played erratically and were injured a lot.

EXTRA POINT: After new defensive coordinator Jim Eddy changed the Oilers' scheme from 3-4 to 4-3, Houston, which gave up 48 touchdowns in 1989, surrendered just 30 last year. DT Ray Childress went to the Pro Bowl, and defensive end Sean Jones had his best year as an Oiler, registering 12.5 sacks. With a year of experience in the new alignment behind them, the Oilers should get even better.

2

PITTSBURGH STEELERS

Few cornerbacks have ever had a season as good as Rod Woodson's 1990. On top of being a Pro Bowl player and perhaps the league's finest corner, Woodson was also a threat on special teams, capable of scoring from anywhere on the field. His level of play put fear in opposing quarterbacks, who seldom challenged him. He was brilliant, and on a team virtually devoid of offense, he was necessary.

He had six solo tackles, broke up a pass and returned a punt 52 yards for a touchdown in the Steelers' 20-9 win over division-rival Houston. In a Monday-night game against the Rams, Woodson returned two kickoffs 49 and 44 yards. He led the team with five interceptions, ranked fifth in tackles and second in passes defended.

But Woodson isn't going to lead the Steelers to a division title by himself. Head coach Chuck Noll must shore up the defensive line, which was simply blown off the ball in games against Cincinnati and Houston. The biggest burden falls on the offense, which completely disappeared for weeks at a time last season in most disturbing fashion. There is talent on this offense, especially at quarterback and running back. But it's notoriously disorganized and sadly lacking in wide receivers.



Lorenzo
White's
rushing
complements
Warren
Moon's
passing in
Houston's
big-time
offense.
Prediction:
First.

JON SOOK/CONCEPTS IN ASSOC.

STEELERS FORECAST

WHY THEY'LL FINISH SECOND: This is a team stocked with sound, experienced veterans and a defense capable of making the big play. The offense is so iffy, though, that it's hard to see them catching the Oilers.

HOT DATE: November 24 vs. Houston. After this one at home, the Steelers go to Dallas and then the Astrodome. This Texas three-step will tell a lot about how far the Steelers can take it this year.

GET RID OF: The obvious answer is offensive coordinator Joe Walton. Off-the-record conversations indicate many of the players feel the same way. Clearly, his offense doesn't match the players, so you either say goodbye to a lot of talented players—or one offensive coordinator.

GET: A big-play wide receiver. The Steelers are hoping one of their rookies (Jeff Graham, Ernie Mills) or free-agent acquisitions will emerge in time to help the virtually nonexistent vertical passing game.

EXTRA POINT: Quarterback Bubba Brister came of age in 1990, completing 57.6 percent of his passes for 2,725 yards; he threw a career-high 20 touchdowns and just 14 interceptions. That happened despite the Steelers' overall offensive chaos. "If Bubba played in Houston," says a teammate, "my God, with that offense, he'd be incredible."



Nose tackle Tim Krumrie personifies the give-it-all approach the Bengals need to repeat in the AFC Central. Prediction: Third.

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3

CINCINNATI BENGALS

In his rookie year, outside linebacker James Francis led the team in tackles (78) and sacks (eight). He also returned an interception for a touchdown. He was consistently productive on an inconsistent defensive unit, which went through numerous changes in 1990 and will no doubt see many more in 1991. The Bengals dropped to 25th in team defense, surrendering an average of 5.5 yards per play.

Francis proved to be a tremendous talent in spite of all that, spending a good deal of his time stuffing running backs and tight ends or whipping past offensive tackles for devastating sacks. He was, essentially, the Bengals' pass rush, as he got little help from the rest of the defensive line. Though his pass coverage still needs development, several scouts believe he's Pro Bowl material in 1991.

That's got to be good news to beleaguered defensive coordinator Dick LeBeau, who will take all the help he can get along the front seven. It could be on the way in the form of rookie Alfred Williams, a pass-rushing linebacker, or Plan B outside linebacker Alex Gordon. If these additions can get the Bengals' defense closer to respectability, the next step is to unleash the potentially awesome offense.

BENGALS FORECAST

WHY THEY'LL FINISH THIRD: Cincinnati is the most distracted team in the NFL, which says something about head coach Sam Wyche. He spends as much time harping about female reporters as he does concocting gimmick offenses that inhibit rather than liberate the performers.

HOT DATE: October 21 against Buffalo. The sugar huddle vs. the no huddle. Just don't leave to make a sandwich.

GET RID OF: The no-huddle offense, or at least most of the complicated variations on it. Buffalo proved last year that the keep-it-simple-stupid method can win games, while the Bengals proved they could bungle games by trying to confuse opponents.

GET: Some pass rushers. After the Bengals suffered through an eight-game stretch in 1990 during which the defensive line recorded only four sacks, Cincinnati brass vowed to fix that problem. Now would be a good time to make good on that vow.

EXTRA POINT: The Bengals flounder outside their division. Over the past two years, they've gone 10-2 vs. the Central and 7-13 vs. the rest of the league.

4

CLEVELAND BROWNS

Kevin Mack was the lone bright spot on a dismal 3-13 Browns football team in 1990.

He carried the ball 158 times for 702 yards, an average of 4.4 yards per carry, and he scored seven times. He ran hard and played hurt; during one four-week stretch, he was forced to wear a cast on a broken left hand. Through it all, he somehow seemed oblivious to the controversy swirling around venerable Cleveland Stadium.

After serving time on a drug-related charge in 1989, Mack bounced back with conviction in '90. He carried his chin high through the Browns' embarrassing season. His career-high 42 catches for 360 yards pushed him over the 1,000-yard mark in total yards from scrimmage.

In a season marred by controversy, inner-office feuds and midseason firings, Mack exemplified what it meant to be a professional. In rebuilding Cleveland, new coach Bill Belichick will take all the help he can muster, and he'll need it: This is a mediocre, aged football team, and it will take all of Belichick's youthful patience to turn this program around.

BROWNS FORECAST

WHY THEY'LL FINISH FOURTH: The Browns sent ex-coach Bud Carson into the 1990 season with 26 players who were acquired as free agents or off waivers. Then they fired him when he didn't win with a team that couldn't beat the Frankfurt Galaxy. This is going to take a while. And owner Art Modell is known for not giving his coaches enough of a while.

HOT DATE: September 22 against the Giants. New coach Bill Belichick goes back to New York to face the defense he built, and he'll face it with a patchwork offensive line. Pray for Bernie Kosar.

GET RID OF: Cornerback Frank Minnifield. The Browns let go of one half of the best corner duo of the '80s when they Plan B'ed Hanford Dixon last year. It's time to dump the other half. Minnifield, who's now 31, contributed to a secondary that gave up a league-high 32 touchdown passes in '90.

GET: Several offensive linemen. A few linebackers. Two defensive backs. A tight end. And an owner who can show some faith in Belichick, who'll turn the Browns around, but not this season.

EXTRA POINT: Defensive tackle Michael Dean Perry mirrored Mack's performance on defense. He had a career-high 11.5 sacks, and his 107 tackles were third-highest on the team.

AFC EAST

THE BILLS WILL BUFFALO THROUGH THE DIVISION

1

BUFFALO BILLS

Wide receiver James Lofton was revived by the Bills' no-huddle attack, and his spirit and attitude, despite his age, reflect the zeal of the AFC champions. "Rookies will ask me how I've been playing 13 years," Lofton says. "I say, 'You don't do it all at once. You do it one play at a time.'"

It makes it a helluva lot more fun when you're playing for the NFL's No. 1 scoring offense, averaging 5.7 yards per play, third-best in the league. And the four-wideout, no-huddle offense, which the Bills finally installed after quarterback Jim Kelly (1990's top-rated passer) had long pushed for a less conservative attack, prevented opponents from substituting key personnel and allowed receivers to take advantage of severe mismatches.

The drive and desire of Lofton during the 1990 season was reminiscent of his youth, and it motivated Buffalo's younger players. Trailing the Los Angeles Raiders, 24-14, in the fourth quarter, Lofton started a three-touchdown barrage with a 42-yard bomb from Kelly. In the playoffs against Miami, Lofton caught seven passes for 149 yards, including a 13-yard touchdown.

Lofton finished 1990 with 35 catches for 712 yards, good for 20.3 yards per catch, best among starting AFC receivers. "My God, Lofton was unbelievable," says former Philadelphia coach Buddy Ryan, whose defense was pillaged by the veteran wideout. "He just ran right through our secondary."

TOM DIPACE



Sammie Smith gives Miami the kind of running game it hopes to use to drive past the Bills. Prediction: Second.

BILLS FORECAST

WHY THEY'LL FINISH FIRST: We're talking about the best offense in the conference teaming with the most efficient defense. The superb starting talent is backed by above-average reserves. Even the front office is one of the best in football.

HOT DATE: Opening day, September 1, against Miami. The Bills hate the Dolphins, and the feeling's mutual. This game will set the tone for what should be another bitter and exciting race.

GET RID OF: Bruce Smith's arrogance. But not him. The NFL's most dominating defensive lineman simply doesn't need to blow his own horn.

GET: Another pass-rushing defensive end to take the pressure off Smith. Also better overall conditioning, which made the difference in Super Bowl XXV.

EXTRA POINT: Kudos to head coach Marv Levy, who kept this team together when feuds and strife threatened to pull it apart. The result was one of the most cohesive units in the NFL. "In 40 years of coaching," says Levy, "I've never had a team this focused."

2

MIAMI DOLPHINS

For the first time since the days of Larry Csonka and Jim Kiick, Miami is something of a running threat. The reason: Sammie Smith, who rushed for 831 yards in his second year. It was the most yards rushing by a Dolphin since Csonka's 837 yards in 1979. Smith, en route to scoring nine touchdowns (eight rushing and one receiving), carried the ball 226 times—the second-highest total in Miami history.

Smith led a resurgent offense that carried Miami back to the playoffs and two games from the Super Bowl. But while the running game has improved, it is the defense that is worrying head coach Don Shula and his staff. Although Miami's defense finished seventh in the NFL in 1990, injuries, age and busted draft picks have left holes everywhere.

The Dolphins have milked all they can get from long-in-the-tooth veterans such as Barry Krauss, E.J. Junior and Paul Lankford. Then, instead of infusing some youth in the defense, they traded a third-round pick for another veteran, John Grimsley.



Jim Kelly leads Buffalo's premier offense, the No. 1 scoring unit in the league last season. Prediction: First.

BRYAN MACDONALD

DOLPHINS FORECAST

WHY THEY'LL FINISH SECOND: The Dolphins have a serious depth problem. Seven Plan B players made the roster (two became starters) in 1990, and Miami dipped heavily into Plan B again this year. The starting veterans offer leadership and consistency, but when Don Shula looks to his bench, it's often a crashshoot.

HOT DATE: November 24 at Chicago. With a relatively light schedule the rest of the way out, this could be the game that decides Miami's playoff future.

GET RID OF: RB Brent Fullwood. During his brief career in Green Bay, Fullwood succeeded in angering coaches and teammates alike with poor work habits, refusing to play hurt and an all-around bad attitude. Before Green Bay traded him last year (to Cleveland, which later released him), Fullwood took himself out of a game, claiming injury, and then was spotted that evening at a Green Bay nightclub.

GET: A pass-rushing defensive lineman. Former first-round pick Eric Kumerow was a bust and got traded to Chicago. John Bosa went to the Jets on Plan B after an injury-plagued career in Miami.

EXTRA POINT: While Miami's emphasis has gone from passing to running, quarterback Dan Marino is still the bread-and-butter guy. He was outstanding last year, turning in his seventh 3,000-yard season. In the clutch, Marino was still magic, producing last-minute wins against the New York Jets and New England. The Raiders' Howie Long says it best: "Dan Marino can still stick his hands down your throat and rip your heart out."

3

NEW YORK JETS

General manager Dick Steinberg and coach Bruce Coslet made some good progress with a young, inexperienced team in 1990, one that included 12 rookies and 23 other players with less than three years of NFL experience. Still, the upwardly mobile Jets have a long way to go. They were just 1-6 against teams with winning records, and the vaunted "attack" offense, which Coslet refined in Cincinnati, sputtered behind an erratic offensive line.

The Jets also did some things right. Three rookies showed superstar potential: CB Tony Stargell, WR Rob Moore and RB Blair Thomas. Patience, not a commodity in large supply anywhere near the Meadowlands, would serve Jets fans well. Steinberg is a proven personnel man, Coslet a war-tested coach. They will succeed. But not in 1991.

ROCK STEWART/ALLSPORT USA



James Hasty and the reconstituted Jets will try to hold back the Bills and Dolphins in the AFC East. Prediction: Third.

JETS FORECAST

WHY THEY'LL FINISH THIRD: It'd be tough to challenge the Bills or Dolphins in this division with any roster. With an inexperienced one, it's near impossible.

HOT DATE: September 23 against the Bears—a Monday-night game at Soldier Field. If the Jets think they're ready for prime time, here's when to show it.

GET RID OF: The thinking that led to the loss of talented corner Anthony Parker, who was released in camp last year in favor of John Booty. Booty was left unprotected in Plan B; Parker turned into a star for the WFLA's New York Knights. That's as close to a personnel blunder from Steinberg as you'll ever see.

GET: Consistency on the offensive line. When guard Dave Cadigan went down with a knee injury, offensive production dropped off by 80 yards a game and left quarterback Ken O'Brien virtually no chance at the vertical passing game.

EXTRA POINT: Hey, NFL players, vote Jets placekicker Pat Leahy into the Pro Bowl this year. He's earned it. Leahy, 39, made 23 of 26 field-goal attempts and was perfect on 32 PAT tries last season. He needs four points to become the NFL's seventh-leading scorer. But he's never seen Hawaii despite 17 productive seasons.

4

INDIANAPOLIS COLTS

Can Jeff George lead the Colts onward and upward? The boy wonder took his team to a

7-9 record in his rookie season, including a 5-3 mark over the second half of the schedule. He finished with 2,152 yards, 16 touchdowns and 13 interceptions, making him just the eighth of 34 starting rookie quarterbacks in the NFL since 1961 to throw more touchdowns than interceptions.

George hushed critics in 1990 when he bounced back from 37 sacks, a concussion, a stomach-muscle pull and assorted other nicks and bruises. But he has a reputation for being unable to take punishment, and teams will continue to test his fortitude. George also set a pattern for success: He is 4-2 in his starts without interceptions; in his seven losses, he threw 11 interceptions. Consistency, obviously, is the hardest thing for a young quarterback to learn, but down the final eight-game stretch of the season, George threw 14 touchdowns against just seven picks.

His best game as a rookie, in the opinion of teammates, was against Cincinnati, when he completed nearly 70 percent of his passes for 251 yards

and fired three touchdowns en route to an upset victory over the Bengals. But the key to success in the NFL is spreading those flashes of brilliance over 16 games. "He's the most accurate passer I've ever seen," says Atlanta quarterback coach June Jones. "He has great velocity, but he still throws a very catchable ball with unbelievable accuracy, especially deep."

Real thing or not, George needs something to work with: The Colts benched the productive Albert Bentley for the marquee name of Eric Dickerson, traded All-Pro receiver Andre Rison, and then surrounded George with mediocrity. The convicts, obviously, are still running the prison.

COLTS FORECAST

WHY THEY'LL FINISH FOURTH: Being in the same division with the lowly Patriots is the only thing keeping the Colts out of the cellar. Their offensive scheme is poor, there's a logjam at running back, and the word "maligned" doesn't need "unduly" in front of it when describing Indy's defense.

HOT DATE: October 6 against the Steelers. Why do we care? It's a battle for bragging rights between two of the NFL's cockiest quarterbacks—Jeff George and Bobby Brister.

GET RID OF: Ahem...Eric Dickerson. Albert Bentley wasn't a 1990 holdout, never complained, caught 71 passes and finished with 1,220 yards from scrimmage, a career high. Dickerson, after disrupting the entire team, trudged to 677 unspectacular yards.

GET: Larry Kennan back. He was a creative offensive coach, but when the news got bad, they shot the paper boy. Kennan was given little authority but received lots of blame, so he left to become head coach of the WFL's London Monarchs. He won the league championship with the league's best-scoring team.

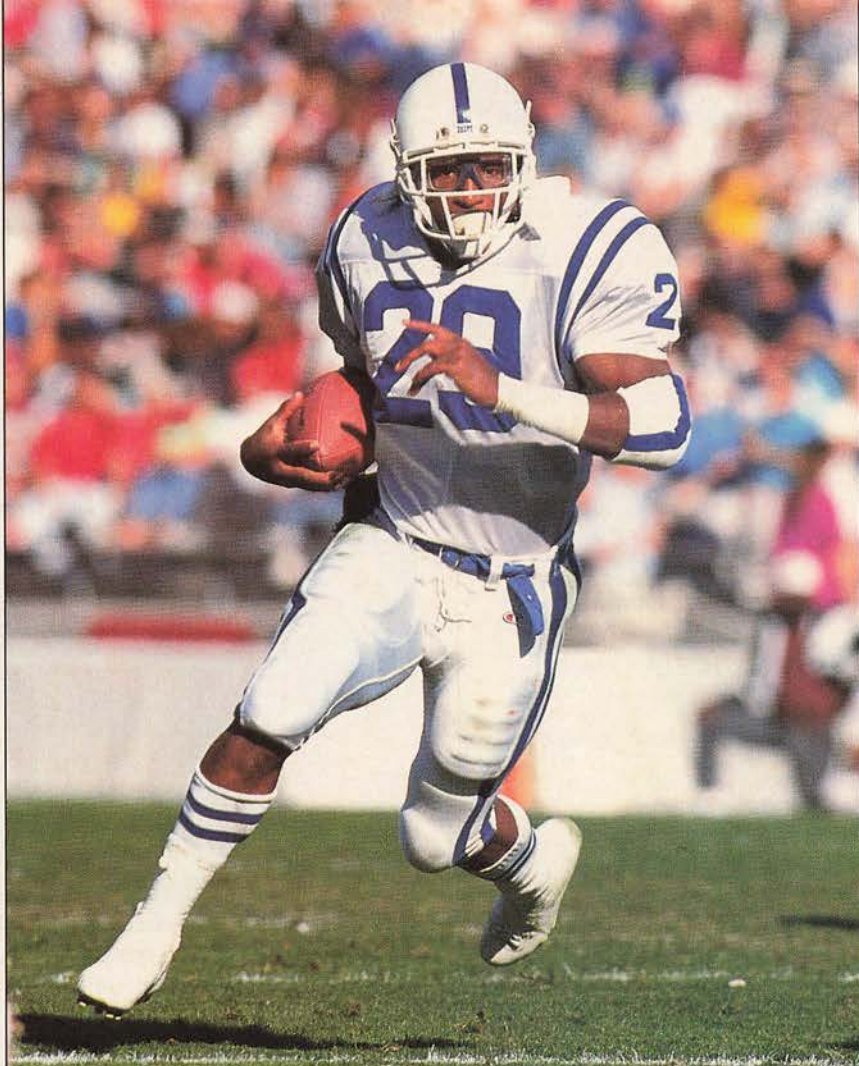
EXTRA POINT: The Colts finished in the bottom five in 11 offensive categories. The defense too was a picture of mediocrity, finishing in the league's bottom three in yards allowed and first downs allowed. Why did they run off just Kennan? Why not everybody?

5

NEW ENGLAND PATRIOTS

Chris Singleton wasted little time establishing himself as the club's future at outside linebacker. In his rookie 1990 season, Singleton played in 13 games, starting four, and finished with 28 tackles and three quarterback sacks. His best game came against Cincinnati, when he had six

DON SMITH



A full, productive year out of Eric Dickerson would help the Colts' cause in a big way. Prediction: Fourth.

tackles and two sacks.

Despite his limited playing time, Singleton made every minute count, impressing the New England front office with his strength against the run. He is still raw against the pass, but he's got the football instincts to overcome that. "Chris has a bright future with the Patriots," says Joe Mendes, Patriots' vice president of player operations. The problem for him, of course, is that the Patriots aren't the context in which you want to have a bright future. New coach Dick MacPherson and CEO Sam Jankovich have promised wholesale changes for the better, so the futures of a lot of veterans probably aren't so bright.

So bad are the Patriots that a pre-season brochure focused on Foxboro Stadium's new grass turf, presumably to distract our attention from the 1991 football outlook. We'll ignore the off-field adventures and give you one fact that should suffice to explain how far the Patriots have to go to get to mediocre: They finished 27th in the league in defense, 26th in offense. ★

PATRIOTS FORECAST

WHY THEY'LL FINISH FIFTH: The talent just isn't there, and where there is outstanding talent (tackle Bruce Armstrong, tight end Marv Cook), there's no depth. The secondary is aging and mistake-prone, and the coaching staff and the quarterback (Tommy Hodson) are inexperienced.

HOT DATE: September 22 against Houston, meaning the AFC's worst defense of 1990 faces the Oilers' top-ranked offense. Could be a record Moon-shot.

GET RID OF: Owner Victor Kiam. Need we say more?

GET: Ready for perhaps 11 new starters this season...or more. The scuttlebutt is that more than half of the 22 starting slots will be there for the taking in training camp. That's just to climb back to average.

EXTRA POINT: Call it the swinging-door approach to rebuilding—of the 50 players on the opening-day roster in 1990, 17 were not with the team in 1989. Of those 17, 11 had either been waived outright, left unprotected, or were unrestricted free agents. MacPherson's NFL baptism will be of fire.

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TOYOTA



ILLUSTRATIONS BY KEVIN CONRAN

AIR FORCE

AUG. 31	WEBER ST.
SEP. 7	@ COLORADO ST.
SEP. 14	@ UTAH
SEP. 21	SAN DIEGO ST.
SEP. 28	@ BRIGHAM YOUNG
OCT. 5	WYOMING
OCT. 12	@ NAVY
OCT. 19	NOTRE DAME
OCT. 26	UTEP
NOV. 2	@ NEW MEXICO
NOV. 9	ARMY
NOV. 23	@ HAWAII

AKRON

SEP. 7	@ WESTERN MICH.
SEP. 14	ILLINOIS ST.
SEP. 21	@ CENTRAL MICH.
SEP. 28	NORTHERN ARIZ.
OCT. 5	@ EAST CAROLINA
OCT. 12	YOUNGSTOWN ST.
OCT. 19	ARKANSAS ST.
OCT. 26	NORTHERN ILL.
NOV. 9	@ VIRGINIA TECH
NOV. 16	@ ARMY
NOV. 23	@ TEMPLE

ALABAMA

SEP. 7	TEMPLE
SEP. 14	@ FLORIDA
SEP. 21	GEORGIA
SEP. 28	@ VANDERBILT
OCT. 5	TENN.-CHATTANOOGA
OCT. 12	TULANE
OCT. 19	TENNESSEE
NOV. 2	MISSISSIPPI ST.
NOV. 9	@ LOUISIANA ST.
NOV. 16	@ MEMPHIS ST.
NOV. 30	@ AUBURN

ARIZONA

SEP. 7	@ OHIO ST.
SEP. 14	STANFORD
SEP. 21	CALIFORNIA
SEP. 28	LONG BEACH ST.
OCT. 5	@ WASHINGTON
OCT. 12	@ UCLA
OCT. 26	MIAMI (FLA.)
NOV. 2	OREGON ST.
NOV. 9	@ WASHINGTON ST.
NOV. 16	SOUTHERN CAL.
NOV. 23	@ ARIZONA ST.

ARIZONA STATE

SEP. 14	@ OKLAHOMA ST.
SEP. 21	@ SOUTHERN CAL.
SEP. 28	NEBRASKA
OCT. 5	UTAH
OCT. 12	@ OREGON ST.
OCT. 19	WASHINGTON ST.
OCT. 26	UCLA
NOV. 2	@ WASHINGTON
NOV. 9	OREGON
NOV. 16	@ CALIFORNIA
NOV. 23	ARIZONA

ARKANSAS

AUG. 31	MIAMI (FLA.) @ LITTLE ROCK
SEP. 7	SMU @ LITTLE ROCK
SEP. 21	SOUTHWESTERN LA.
SEP. 28	MISSISSIPPI @ JACKSON
OCT. 5	@ TEXAS CHRISTIAN

OCT. 12	HOUSTON
OCT. 19	TEXAS @ LITTLE ROCK
NOV. 2	BAYLOR
NOV. 9	@ TEXAS TECH
NOV. 16	@ TEXAS A&M
NOV. 23	RICE @ LITTLE ROCK

ARMY

SEP. 14	COLGATE
SEP. 21	NORTH CAROLINA
SEP. 28	HARVARD
OCT. 5	RUTGERS @ E. RUTHERFORD
OCT. 12	CITADEL
OCT. 19	@ LOUISVILLE
OCT. 26	BOSTON COLLEGE
NOV. 2	VANDERBILT
NOV. 9	@ AIR FORCE
NOV. 16	AKRON
DEC. 7	NAVY @ PHILADELPHIA

AUBURN

AUG. 31	GA. SOUTHERN
SEP. 14	MISSISSIPPI
SEP. 21	@ TEXAS
SEP. 28	@ TENNESSEE
OCT. 5	SOUTHERN MISS.
OCT. 12	@ VANDERBILT
OCT. 26	MISSISSIPPI ST.
NOV. 2	FLORIDA
NOV. 9	SOUTHWESTERN LA.
NOV. 16	@ GEORGIA
NOV. 30	ALABAMA

BALL STATE

AUG. 31	MIAMI (OHIO)
SEP. 7	@ NAVY
SEP. 14	@ TEXAS CHRISTIAN
SEP. 21	KENT ST.
SEP. 28	@ INDIANA ST.
OCT. 5	WESTERN MICH.
OCT. 12	@ EASTERN MICH.
OCT. 26	@ CENTRAL MICH.
NOV. 2	OHIO
NOV. 9	@ TOLEDO
NOV. 16	BOWLING GREEN

BAYLOR

SEP. 7	UTEP
SEP. 14	@ COLORADO
SEP. 21	MISSOURI
SEP. 28	@ SOUTHERN METHODIST
OCT. 5	@ HOUSTON
OCT. 12	RICE
OCT. 19	TEXAS A&M
OCT. 26	TEXAS CHRISTIAN
NOV. 2	@ ARKANSAS
NOV. 16	TEXAS TECH
NOV. 23	@ TEXAS

BOSTON COLLEGE

AUG. 31	@ RUTGERS
SEP. 7	MICHIGAN
SEP. 14	GEORGIA TECH
SEP. 28	@ PENN. ST.
OCT. 12	LOUISVILLE
OCT. 19	WEST VIRGINIA
OCT. 26	@ ARMY
NOV. 2	PITTSBURGH
NOV. 9	@ TEMPLE
NOV. 16	@ SYRACUSE
NOV. 23	MIAMI (FLA.)

BOWLING GREEN

AUG. 31	EASTERN MICH.
SEP. 7	@ WEST VIRGINIA
SEP. 21	CINCINNATI
SEP. 28	@ NAVY
OCT. 5	CENTRAL MICH.
OCT. 12	@ OHIO
OCT. 19	TOLEDO
OCT. 26	@ WESTERN MICH.
NOV. 2	@ MIAMI (OHIO)
NOV. 9	KENT ST.
NOV. 16	@ BALL ST.

BRIGHAM YOUNG

AUG. 29	FLORIDA ST. @ ANAHEIM
SEP. 7	@ UCLA
SEP. 21	@ PENN. ST.
SEP. 28	AIR FORCE
OCT. 4	UTAH ST.
OCT. 12	UTEP
OCT. 19	HAWAII
OCT. 26	@ NEW MEXICO
OCT. 31	@ COLORADO ST.
NOV. 9	WYOMING
NOV. 16	@ SAN DIEGO ST.
NOV. 23	UTAH

CALIFORNIA

SEP. 7	PACIFIC
SEP. 14	PURDUE
SEP. 21	@ ARIZONA
OCT. 5	@ UCLA
OCT. 12	OREGON
OCT. 19	WASHINGTON
OCT. 26	SAN JOSE ST.
NOV. 2	SOUTHERN CAL.
NOV. 9	@ OREGON ST.
NOV. 16	ARIZONA ST.
NOV. 23	@ STANFORD

CENTRAL MICHIGAN

AUG. 31	@ OHIO
SEP. 7	SOUTHWESTERN LA.
SEP. 14	@ MICHIGAN ST.
SEP. 21	AKRON
SEP. 28	@ TOLEDO
OCT. 5	@ BOWLING GREEN
OCT. 12	MIAMI (OHIO)
OCT. 19	@ KENT ST.
OCT. 26	BALL ST.
NOV. 2	@ EASTERN MICH.
NOV. 16	WESTERN MICH.
NOV. 23	@ WOFFORD

CINCINNATI

SEP. 7	@ PENN. ST.
SEP. 14	@ NORTH CAROLINA
SEP. 21	@ BOWLING GREEN
SEP. 28	MIAMI (OHIO)
OCT. 5	@ LOUISVILLE
OCT. 12	@ KENT ST.
OCT. 19	@ VIRGINIA TECH
OCT. 26	SOUTHERN MISS.
NOV. 2	@ KENTUCKY
NOV. 9	MIDDLE TENN. ST.
NOV. 23	EAST CAROLINA

CLEMSON

SEP. 7	APPALACHIAN ST.
SEP. 21	TEMPLE
SEP. 28	GEORGIA TECH
OCT. 5	@ GEORGIA
OCT. 12	VIRGINIA

OCT. 26	NORTH CAROLINA ST.
NOV. 2	WAKE FOREST
NOV. 9	@ NORTH CAROLINA
NOV. 16	MARYLAND
NOV. 23	@ SOUTH CAROLINA
DEC. 1	DUKE @ TOKYO

COLORADO

SEP. 7	WYOMING
SEP. 14	BAYLOR
SEP. 21	MINNESOTA
SEP. 28	@ STANFORD
OCT. 12	MISSOURI
OCT. 19	@ OKLAHOMA
OCT. 26	@ KANSAS ST.
NOV. 2	NEBRASKA
NOV. 9	@ OKLAHOMA ST.
NOV. 16	KANSAS
NOV. 23	@ IOWA ST.

COLORADO STATE

AUG. 31	ARKANSAS ST.
SEP. 7	AIR FORCE
SEP. 14	@ NEBRASKA
SEP. 21	@ SOUTHERN MISS.
SEP. 28	HAWAII
OCT. 5	@ UTEP
OCT. 19	@ UTAH
OCT. 26	@ WYOMING
OCT. 31	BRIGHAM YOUNG
NOV. 9	@ SAN DIEGO ST.
NOV. 16	NEW MEXICO

DUKE

SEP. 7	@ SOUTH CAROLINA
SEP. 14	RUTGERS
SEP. 21	COLGATE
SEP. 28	@ VIRGINIA
OCT. 5	VANDERBILT
OCT. 26	@ MARYLAND
NOV. 2	GEORGIA TECH
NOV. 9	@ WAKE FOREST
NOV. 16	NORTH CAROLINA ST.
NOV. 23	@ NORTH CAROLINA
DEC. 1	CLEMSON @ TOKYO

EAST CAROLINA

AUG. 31	@ ILLINOIS
SEP. 14	MEMPHIS ST.
SEP. 21	@ CENTRAL FLA.
SEP. 28	SOUTH CAROLINA
OCT. 5	AKRON
OCT. 12	@ SYRACUSE
OCT. 26	PITTSBURGH
NOV. 2	TULANE
NOV. 9	@ SOUTHERN MISS.
NOV. 16	@ VIRGINIA TECH
NOV. 23	@ CINCINNATI

EASTERN MICHIGAN

AUG. 31	@ BOWLING GREEN
SEP. 7	@ PURDUE
SEP. 14	@ MIAMI (OHIO)
SEP. 21	LOUISIANA TECH
SEP. 28	@ WISCONSIN
OCT. 5	@ KENT ST.
OCT. 12	BALL ST.
OCT. 19	WESTERN MICH.
NOV. 2	CENTRAL MICH.
NOV. 9	@ OHIO
NOV. 16	TOLEDO

FLORIDA

SEP. 7	SAN JOSE ST.
SEP. 14	ALABAMA
SEP. 21	@ SYRACUSE
SEP. 28	MISSISSIPPI ST. @ ORLANDO
OCT. 5	@ LOUISIANA ST.
OCT. 12	TENNESSEE
OCT. 19	NORTHERN ILL.
NOV. 2	@ AUBURN
NOV. 9	GEORGIA @ JACKSONVILLE
NOV. 16	KENTUCKY
NOV. 30	FLORIDA ST.

FLORIDA STATE

AUG. 29	BYU @ ANAHEIM
SEP. 7	TULANE
SEP. 14	WESTERN MICH.
SEP. 28	@ MICHIGAN
OCT. 5	SYRACUSE
OCT. 12	VIRGINIA TECH. @ ORLANDO
OCT. 19	MIDDLE TENN. ST.
OCT. 26	@ LOUISIANA ST.
NOV. 2	@ LOUISVILLE
NOV. 9	SOUTH CAROLINA
NOV. 16	MIAMI (FLA.)
NOV. 30	@ FLORIDA

FRESNO STATE

SEP. 7	NORTHERN ILL.
SEP. 14	@ WASHINGTON ST.
SEP. 21	@ OREGON ST.
OCT. 5	NEW MEXICO
OCT. 12	LONG BEACH ST.
OCT. 19	NEW MEXICO ST.
OCT. 26	NEVADA-LAS VEGAS
NOV. 2	@ UTAH ST.
NOV. 9	@ PACIFIC
NOV. 16	CAL ST. FULLERTON
NOV. 23	SAN JOSE ST.

CAL STATE FULLERTON

AUG. 31	@ MISSISSIPPI ST.
SEP. 7	@ TEXAS TECH
SEP. 21	CAL ST. NORTH-RIDGE
SEP. 28	@ GEORGIA
OCT. 5	@ PACIFIC
OCT. 12	NEVADA-LAS VEGAS
OCT. 19	@ UTAH ST.
NOV. 2	NEW MEXICO ST.
NOV. 9	@ SAN JOSE ST.
NOV. 16	@ FRESNO ST.
NOV. 23	LONG BEACH ST.

GEORGIA

AUG. 31	WESTERN CAROLINA
SEP. 7	LOUISIANA ST.
SEP. 21	@ ALABAMA
SEP. 28	CAL ST. FULLERTON
OCT. 5	CLEMSON
OCT. 12	@ MISSISSIPPI
OCT. 19	@ VANDERBILT
OCT. 26	KENTUCKY
NOV. 9	FLORIDA @ JACKSONVILLE
NOV. 16	AUBURN
NOV. 30	@ GEORGIA TECH

GEORGIA TECH

AUG. 28	PENN. ST. @ E. RUTHERFORD
SEP. 14	@ BOSTON COLLEGE
SEP. 19	VIRGINIA
SEP. 28	@ CLEMSON
OCT. 5	@ NORTH CAROLINA ST.
OCT. 12	MARYLAND

1991 COLLEGE FOOTBALL SCHEDULE



OCT. 19 @ SOUTH CAROLINA
OCT. 26 NORTH CAROLINA
NOV. 2 @ DUKE
NOV. 9 FURMAN
NOV. 16 WAKE FOREST
NOV. 30 GEORGIA

HAWAII

AUG. 31 @ WYOMING
SEP. 7 @ IOWA
SEP. 14 NEW MEXICO
SEP. 21 PACIFIC
SEP. 28 @ COLORADO ST.
OCT. 5 SAN DIEGO ST.
OCT. 19 @ BRIGHAM YOUNG
NOV. 2 UTAH
NOV. 9 UTEP
NOV. 16 @ SAN JOSE ST.
NOV. 23 AIR FORCE
NOV. 30 NOTRE DAME

HOUSTON

AUG. 31 LOUISIANA TECH
SEP. 12 @ MIAMI (FLA.)
SEP. 21 @ ILLINOIS
OCT. 5 BAYLOR
OCT. 12 @ ARKANSAS
OCT. 19 SOUTHERN METHODIST
OCT. 26 @ TEXAS A&M
NOV. 9 TEXAS
NOV. 16 @ RICE
NOV. 23 @ TEXAS CHRISTIAN
NOV. 30 TEXAS TECH

ILLINOIS

AUG. 31 EAST CAROLINA
SEP. 14 @ MISSOURI
SEP. 21 HOUSTON
OCT. 5 MINNESOTA
OCT. 12 OHIO ST.
OCT. 19 @ IOWA
OCT. 26 @ NORTHWESTERN
NOV. 2 WISCONSIN
NOV. 9 @ PURDUE
NOV. 16 MICHIGAN
NOV. 23 @ MICHIGAN ST.

INDIANA

SEP. 7 @ NOTRE DAME
SEP. 21 KENTUCKY
SEP. 28 @ MISSOURI
OCT. 5 MICHIGAN ST.
OCT. 12 NORTHWESTERN
OCT. 19 @ MICHIGAN
OCT. 26 @ WISCONSIN
NOV. 2 MINNESOTA
NOV. 9 @ IOWA
NOV. 16 @ OHIO ST.
NOV. 23 PURDUE

IOWA

SEP. 7 HAWAII
SEP. 14 @ IOWA ST.
SEP. 28 NORTHERN ILL.
OCT. 5 MICHIGAN
OCT. 12 @ WISCONSIN
OCT. 19 ILLINOIS
OCT. 26 @ PURDUE
NOV. 2 @ OHIO ST.
NOV. 9 INDIANA
NOV. 16 @ NORTHWESTERN
NOV. 23 MINNESOTA

IOWA STATE

SEP. 7 EASTERN ILL.
SEP. 14 IOWA
SEP. 21 @ WISCONSIN
SEP. 28 @ RICE
OCT. 5 OKLAHOMA
OCT. 19 @ KANSAS
OCT. 26 @ OKLAHOMA ST.
NOV. 2 @ MISSOURI
NOV. 9 KANSAS ST.
NOV. 16 @ NEBRASKA
NOV. 23 COLORADO

KANSAS

SEP. 7 @ TOLEDO
SEP. 14 TULSA
SEP. 21 NEW MEXICO ST.
OCT. 5 @ VIRGINIA
OCT. 12 @ KANSAS ST.
OCT. 19 IOWA ST.
OCT. 26 @ OKLAHOMA
NOV. 2 @ OKLAHOMA ST.
NOV. 9 NEBRASKA
NOV. 16 @ COLORADO
NOV. 23 MISSOURI

KANSAS STATE

SEP. 7 INDIANA ST.
SEP. 14 IDAHO ST.
SEP. 21 NORTHERN ILL.
SEP. 28 @ WASHINGTON
OCT. 12 KANSAS
OCT. 19 @ NEBRASKA
OCT. 26 COLORADO
NOV. 2 @ OKLAHOMA
NOV. 9 @ IOWA ST.
NOV. 16 MISSOURI
NOV. 23 @ OKLAHOMA ST.

KENT

SEP. 14 @ NORTH CAROLINA ST.
SEP. 21 @ BALL ST.
SEP. 28 @ KENTUCKY
OCT. 5 EASTERN MICH.
OCT. 12 CINCINNATI
OCT. 19 CENTRAL MICH.
OCT. 26 @ OHIO
NOV. 2 TOLEDO
NOV. 9 @ BOWLING GREEN
NOV. 16 MIAMI (OHIO)
NOV. 23 @ WESTERN MICH.

KENTUCKY

SEP. 7 MIAMI (OHIO)
SEP. 21 @ INDIANA
SEP. 28 KENT ST.
OCT. 5 MISSISSIPPI
OCT. 12 @ MISSISSIPPI ST.
OCT. 19 LOUISIANA ST.
OCT. 26 @ GEORGIA
NOV. 2 CINCINNATI
NOV. 9 @ VANDERBILT
NOV. 16 @ FLORIDA
NOV. 23 TENNESSEE

LONG BEACH STATE

SEP. 8 @ SAN DIEGO ST.
SEP. 14 @ BOISE ST.
SEP. 21 SAN JOSE ST.
SEP. 28 @ ARIZONA
OCT. 5 @ NEVADA-LAS VEGAS
OCT. 12 @ FRESNO ST.
OCT. 19 @ MIAMI (FLA.)

OCT. 26 UTAH ST.
NOV. 2 PACIFIC
NOV. 9 @ NEW MEXICO ST.
NOV. 23 @ CAL ST. FULLERTON

LOUISIANA STATE

SEP. 7 @ GEORGIA
SEP. 14 @ TEXAS A&M
SEP. 21 VANDERBILT
OCT. 5 FLORIDA
OCT. 12 ARKANSAS ST.
OCT. 19 @ KENTUCKY
OCT. 26 FLORIDA ST.
NOV. 2 MISSISSIPPI @ JACKSON
NOV. 9 ALABAMA
NOV. 16 MISSISSIPPI ST.
NOV. 23 @ TULANE

LOUISIANA TECH

AUG. 31 @ HOUSTON
SEP. 14 MONTANA
SEP. 21 @ EASTERN MICH.
SEP. 28 @ ARKANSAS ST.
OCT. 5 @ NORTHERN ILL.
OCT. 12 @ SOUTH CAROLINA
OCT. 26 @ SOUTHWESTERN LA.
NOV. 2 NORTHEAST LA.
NOV. 9 SOUTHERN ILL.
NOV. 16 SOUTHERN MISS.
NOV. 23 @ UTEP

LOUISVILLE

AUG. 31 EASTERN KY.
SEP. 5 TENNESSEE
SEP. 14 @ OHIO ST.
SEP. 28 SOUTHERN MISS.
OCT. 5 CINCINNATI
OCT. 12 @ BOSTON COLLEGE
OCT. 19 ARMY
OCT. 26 @ VIRGINIA TECH
NOV. 2 FLORIDA ST.
NOV. 9 @ MEMPHIS ST.
NOV. 16 @ TULSA

MARYLAND

SEP. 7 VIRGINIA
SEP. 14 SYRACUSE
SEP. 21 WEST VIRGINIA
OCT. 5 @ PITTSBURGH
OCT. 12 @ GEORGIA TECH
OCT. 19 @ WAKE FOREST
OCT. 26 DUKE
NOV. 2 @ NORTH CAROLINA
NOV. 9 PENN ST. @ BALTIMORE
NOV. 16 @ CLEMSON
NOV. 23 @ NORTH CAROLINA ST.

MEMPHIS STATE

SEP. 2 @ SOUTHERN CAL
SEP. 7 MISSISSIPPI

SEP. 14 @ EAST CAROLINA
SEP. 21 ARKANSAS ST.
OCT. 5 @ MISSOURI
OCT. 12 SOUTHERN MISS.
OCT. 19 @ MISSISSIPPI ST.
OCT. 26 TULSA
NOV. 2 @ TENNESSEE
NOV. 9 LOUISVILLE
NOV. 16 ALABAMA

MIAMI (FLORIDA)

AUG. 31 ARKANSAS @ LITTLE ROCK
SEP. 12 HOUSTON
SEP. 28 @ TULSA
OCT. 5 OKLAHOMA ST.
OCT. 12 PENN ST.
OCT. 19 LONG BEACH ST.
OCT. 26 @ ARIZONA
NOV. 9 WEST VIRGINIA
NOV. 16 @ FLORIDA ST.
NOV. 23 @ BOSTON COLLEGE
NOV. 30 SAN DIEGO ST.

MIAMI (OHIO)

AUG. 31 BALL ST.
SEP. 7 @ KENTUCKY
SEP. 14 EASTERN MICH.
SEP. 28 @ CINCINNATI
OCT. 5 @ SOUTHWESTERN LA.
OCT. 12 @ CENTRAL MICH.
OCT. 19 @ OHIO
OCT. 26 @ TOLEDO
NOV. 2 BOWLING GREEN
NOV. 9 @ WESTERN MICH.
NOV. 16 @ KENT ST.

MICHIGAN

SEP. 7 @ BOSTON COLLEGE
SEP. 14 NOTRE DAME
SEP. 28 FLORIDA ST.
OCT. 5 @ IOWA
OCT. 12 @ MICHIGAN ST.
OCT. 19 INDIANA
OCT. 26 @ MINNESOTA
NOV. 2 PURDUE
NOV. 9 NORTHWESTERN
NOV. 16 @ ILLINOIS
NOV. 23 OHIO ST.

MICHIGAN STATE

SEP. 14 CENTRAL MICH.
SEP. 21 @ NOTRE DAME
SEP. 28 RUTGERS
OCT. 5 @ INDIANA
OCT. 12 MICHIGAN
OCT. 19 MINNESOTA
OCT. 26 @ OHIO ST.
NOV. 2 NORTHWESTERN
NOV. 9 @ WISCONSIN
NOV. 16 @ PURDUE
NOV. 23 ILLINOIS

MINNESOTA

SEP. 14 SAN JOSE ST.
SEP. 21 @ COLORADO
SEP. 28 PITTSBURGH
OCT. 5 @ ILLINOIS
OCT. 12 PURDUE
OCT. 19 @ MICHIGAN ST.
OCT. 26 MICHIGAN
NOV. 2 @ INDIANA
NOV. 9 OHIO ST.
NOV. 16 WISCONSIN
NOV. 23 @ IOWA

MISSISSIPPI

AUG. 31 @ TULANE
SEP. 7 @ MEMPHIS ST.
SEP. 14 @ AUBURN
SEP. 21 OHIO
SEP. 28 ARKANSAS @ JACKSON
OCT. 5 @ KENTUCKY
OCT. 12 GEORGIA
OCT. 26 VANDERBILT
NOV. 2 LOUISIANA ST. @ JACKSON
NOV. 16 @ TENNESSEE
NOV. 23 @ MISSISSIPPI ST.

MISSISSIPPI STATE

AUG. 31 CAL ST. FULLERTON
SEP. 7 TEXAS
SEP. 14 TULANE
SEP. 21 @ TENNESSEE
SEP. 28 FLORIDA @ ORLANDO
OCT. 12 KENTUCKY
OCT. 19 MEMPHIS ST.
OCT. 26 @ AUBURN
NOV. 2 @ ALABAMA
NOV. 16 LOUISIANA ST.
NOV. 23 MISSISSIPPI

MISSOURI

SEP. 14 ILLINOIS
SEP. 21 @ BAYLOR
SEP. 28 INDIANA
OCT. 5 MEMPHIS ST.
OCT. 12 @ COLORADO
OCT. 19 OKLAHOMA ST.
OCT. 26 @ NEBRASKA
NOV. 2 IOWA ST.
NOV. 9 OKLAHOMA
NOV. 16 @ KANSAS ST.
NOV. 23 @ KANSAS

NAVY (U.S. NAVAL ACAD.)

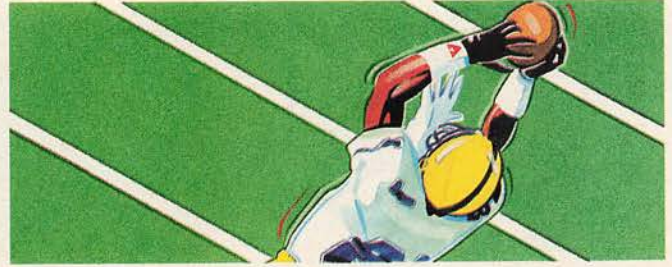
SEP. 7 BALL ST.
SEP. 14 @ VIRGINIA
SEP. 21 WILLIAM & MARY
SEP. 28 BOWLING GREEN
OCT. 12 AIR FORCE
OCT. 19 @ TEMPLE
OCT. 26 DELAWARE



TOYOTA

"I love what you do for me."

TOYOTA



ILLUSTRATIONS BY KEVIN CONRAN

NOV. 2 @ NOTRE DAME
NOV. 9 @ TULANE
NOV. 23 WAKE FOREST
DEC. 7 ARMY @ PHILADELPHIA

NEBRASKA

SEP. 7 UTAH ST.
SEP. 14 COLORADO ST.
SEP. 21 WASHINGTON
SEP. 28 @ ARIZONA ST.
OCT. 12 @ OKLAHOMA ST.
OCT. 19 KANSAS ST.
OCT. 26 MISSOURI
NOV. 2 @ COLORADO
NOV. 9 @ KANSAS
NOV. 16 IOWA ST.
NOV. 29 OKLAHOMA

NEVADA-LAS VEGAS

SEP. 7 @ NEVADA-RENO
SEP. 14 OREGON ST.
SEP. 21 @ NEW MEXICO
SEP. 28 WASHINGTON ST.
OCT. 5 LONG BEACH ST.
OCT. 12 @ CAL ST. FULLERTON
OCT. 26 @ FRESNO ST.
NOV. 2 @ SAN JOSE ST.
NOV. 9 UTAH ST.
NOV. 16 NEW MEXICO ST.
NOV. 23 PACIFIC

NEW MEXICO

AUG. 31 @ UTEP
SEP. 7 @ TEXAS CHRISTIAN
SEP. 14 @ HAWAII
SEP. 21 NEVADA-LAS VEGAS
SEP. 28 NEW MEXICO ST.
OCT. 5 @ FRESNO ST.
OCT. 12 @ SAN DIEGO ST.
OCT. 19 WYOMING
OCT. 26 BRIGHAM YOUNG
NOV. 2 AIR FORCE
NOV. 9 @ UTAH
NOV. 16 @ COLORADO ST.

NEW MEXICO STATE

SEP. 14 UTEP
SEP. 21 @ KANSAS
SEP. 28 @ NEW MEXICO
OCT. 5 @ OREGON
OCT. 12 SAN JOSE ST.
OCT. 19 FRESNO ST.
OCT. 26 @ PACIFIC
NOV. 2 @ CAL ST. FULLERTON
NOV. 9 LONG BEACH ST.
NOV. 16 @ NEVADA-LAS VEGAS
NOV. 23 UTAH ST.

NORTH CAROLINA

SEP. 14 CINCINNATI
SEP. 21 @ ARMY
SEP. 28 @ NORTH CAROLINA ST.
OCT. 5 WILLIAM & MARY
OCT. 12 WAKE FOREST
OCT. 19 @ VIRGINIA
OCT. 26 @ GEORGIA TECH
NOV. 2 MARYLAND
NOV. 9 CLEMSON
NOV. 16 SOUTH CAROLINA
NOV. 23 DUKE

NORTH CAROLINA STATE

SEP. 7 VIRGINIA TECH

SEP. 14 KENT ST.
SEP. 21 @ WAKE FOREST
SEP. 28 NORTH CAROLINA
OCT. 5 GEORGIA TECH
OCT. 19 MARSHALL
OCT. 26 @ CLEMSON
NOV. 2 @ SOUTH CAROLINA
NOV. 9 VIRGINIA
NOV. 16 @ DUKE
NOV. 23 MARYLAND

NORTHERN ILLINOIS

SEP. 7 @ FRESNO ST.
SEP. 14 ARKANSAS ST.
SEP. 21 @ KANSAS ST.
SEP. 28 @ IOWA
OCT. 5 LOUISIANA TECH
OCT. 12 WESTERN MICH.
OCT. 19 @ FLORIDA
OCT. 26 @ AKRON
NOV. 2 SOUTHWESTERN LA.
NOV. 16 ILLINOIS ST.
NOV. 23 @ TOLEDO

NORTHWESTERN

SEP. 14 RICE
SEP. 21 @ RUTGERS
SEP. 28 WAKE FOREST
OCT. 5 PURDUE
OCT. 12 @ INDIANA
OCT. 19 OHIO ST. @ CLEVELAND
OCT. 26 ILLINOIS
NOV. 2 @ MICHIGAN ST.
NOV. 9 @ MICHIGAN
NOV. 16 IOWA
NOV. 23 @ WISCONSIN

NOTRE DAME

SEP. 7 INDIANA
SEP. 14 @ MICHIGAN
SEP. 21 MICHIGAN ST.
SEP. 28 @ PURDUE
OCT. 5 @ STANFORD
OCT. 12 PITTSBURGH
OCT. 19 @ AIR FORCE
OCT. 26 SOUTHERN CAL.
NOV. 2 NAVY
NOV. 9 TENNESSEE
NOV. 16 @ PENN. ST.
NOV. 30 @ HAWAII

OHIO

AUG. 31 CENTRAL MICH.
SEP. 14 TENNESSEE TECH
SEP. 21 @ MISSISSIPPI
SEP. 28 @ WESTERN MICH.
OCT. 5 @ TOLEDO
OCT. 12 BOWLING GREEN
OCT. 19 @ MIAMI (OHIO)
OCT. 26 KENT ST.
NOV. 2 @ BALL ST.
NOV. 9 EASTERN MICH.
NOV. 23 @ TULSA

OHIO STATE

SEP. 7 ARIZONA
SEP. 14 LOUISVILLE
SEP. 21 WASHINGTON ST.
OCT. 5 WISCONSIN
OCT. 12 @ ILLINOIS
OCT. 19 N. WESTERN @ CLEVELAND
OCT. 26 MICHIGAN ST.
NOV. 2 IOWA
NOV. 9 @ MINNESOTA
NOV. 16 INDIANA

NOV. 23 @ MICHIGAN

OKLAHOMA

SEP. 14 NORTH TEXAS
SEP. 21 UTAH ST.
SEP. 28 VIRGINIA TECH
OCT. 5 @ IOWA ST.
OCT. 12 TEXAS @ DALLAS
OCT. 19 COLORADO
OCT. 26 KANSAS
NOV. 2 KANSAS ST.
NOV. 9 @ MISSOURI
NOV. 16 OKLAHOMA ST.
NOV. 29 @ NEBRASKA

OKLAHOMA STATE

SEP. 7 @ TULSA
SEP. 14 ARIZONA ST.
SEP. 21 TEXAS CHRISTIAN
OCT. 5 @ MIAMI (FLA.)
OCT. 12 NEBRASKA
OCT. 19 @ MISSOURI
OCT. 26 IOWA ST.
NOV. 2 KANSAS
NOV. 9 COLORADO
NOV. 16 @ OKLAHOMA
NOV. 23 KANSAS ST.

OREGON

SEP. 7 WASHINGTON ST.
SEP. 14 @ TEXAS TECH
SEP. 21 @ UTAH
SEP. 28 SOUTHERN CAL.
OCT. 5 NEW MEXICO ST.
OCT. 12 @ CALIFORNIA
OCT. 26 @ WASHINGTON
NOV. 2 STANFORD
NOV. 9 @ ARIZONA ST.
NOV. 16 @ UCLA
NOV. 23 OREGON ST.

OREGON STATE

SEP. 7 UTAH
SEP. 14 @ NEVADA-LAS VEGAS
SEP. 21 FRESNO ST.
OCT. 5 @ WASHINGTON ST.
OCT. 12 ARIZONA ST.
OCT. 19 UCLA
OCT. 26 @ STANFORD
NOV. 2 @ ARIZONA
NOV. 9 CALIFORNIA
NOV. 16 WASHINGTON
NOV. 23 @ OREGON

PACIFIC

AUG. 31 CAL ST. SACRAMENTO
SEP. 7 @ CALIFORNIA
SEP. 14 @ SAN DIEGO ST.
SEP. 21 @ HAWAII
OCT. 5 CAL ST. FULLERTON
OCT. 12 CAL. POLY-SLO
OCT. 19 @ SAN JOSE ST.
OCT. 26 NEW MEXICO ST.
NOV. 2 @ LONG BEACH ST.
NOV. 9 FRESNO ST.
NOV. 16 @ UTAH ST.
NOV. 23 @ NEVADA-LAS VEGAS

PENN STATE

AUG. 28 GA. TECH @ E. RUTHERFORD
SEP. 7 CINCINNATI
SEP. 14 @ SOUTHERN CAL.
SEP. 21 BRIGHAM YOUNG

SEP. 28 BOSTON COLLEGE
OCT. 5 @ TEMPLE
OCT. 12 @ MIAMI (FLA.)
OCT. 19 RUTGERS
OCT. 26 WEST VIRGINIA
NOV. 9 MARYLAND @ BALTIMORE
NOV. 16 NOTRE DAME
NOV. 28 @ PITTSBURGH

PITTSBURGH

AUG. 31 @ WEST VIRGINIA
SEP. 7 SOUTHERN MISS.
SEP. 14 TEMPLE
SEP. 28 @ MINNESOTA
OCT. 5 MARYLAND
OCT. 12 @ NOTRE DAME
OCT. 19 SYRACUSE
OCT. 26 @ EAST CAROLINA
NOV. 2 @ BOSTON COLLEGE
NOV. 9 RUTGERS
NOV. 28 PENN. ST.

PURDUE

SEP. 7 EASTERN MICH.
SEP. 14 @ CALIFORNIA
SEP. 28 NOTRE DAME
OCT. 5 @ NORTHWESTERN
OCT. 12 @ MINNESOTA
OCT. 19 WISCONSIN
OCT. 26 IOWA
NOV. 2 @ MICHIGAN
NOV. 9 ILLINOIS
NOV. 16 MICHIGAN ST.
NOV. 23 @ INDIANA

RICE

SEP. 14 @ NORTHWESTERN
SEP. 21 @ TULANE
SEP. 28 IOWA ST.
OCT. 5 @ TEXAS
OCT. 12 @ BAYLOR
OCT. 19 TEXAS CHRISTIAN
OCT. 26 TEXAS TECH
NOV. 2 TEXAS A & M
NOV. 9 @ SOUTHERN METHODIST
NOV. 16 HOUSTON
NOV. 23 ARKANSAS @ LITTLE ROCK

RUTGERS

AUG. 31 BOSTON COLLEGE
SEP. 14 @ DUKE
SEP. 21 NORTHWESTERN
SEP. 28 @ MICHIGAN ST.
OCT. 5 ARMY @ E. RUTHERFORD
OCT. 12 MAINE
OCT. 19 @ PENN. ST.
OCT. 26 SYRAC. @ E. RUTHERFORD
NOV. 2 @ WEST VIRGINIA
NOV. 9 @ PITTSBURGH
NOV. 16 TEMPLE

SAN DIEGO STATE

SEP. 8 LONG BEACH ST.
SEP. 14 PACIFIC
SEP. 21 @ AIR FORCE
SEP. 26 UCLA
OCT. 5 @ HAWAII
OCT. 12 NEW MEXICO
OCT. 19 @ UTEP
OCT. 26 @ UTAH
NOV. 2 WYOMING
NOV. 9 COLORADO ST.
NOV. 16 BRIGHAM YOUNG
NOV. 30 @ MIAMI (FLA.)

SAN JOSE STATE

SEP. 7 @ FLORIDA
SEP. 14 @ MINNESOTA
SEP. 21 @ LONG BEACH ST.
SEP. 28 @ UTAH ST.
OCT. 12 @ NEW MEXICO ST.
OCT. 19 PACIFIC
OCT. 26 @ CALIFORNIA
NOV. 2 NEVADA-LAS VEGAS
NOV. 9 CAL ST. FULLERTON
NOV. 16 HAWAII
NOV. 23 @ FRESNO ST.

SOUTH CAROLINA

SEP. 7 DUKE
SEP. 14 @ WEST VIRGINIA
SEP. 21 VIRGINIA TECH
SEP. 28 @ EAST CAROLINA
OCT. 5 EAST TENN. ST.
OCT. 12 LOUISIANA TECH
OCT. 19 GEORGIA TECH
NOV. 2 NORTH CAROLINA ST.
NOV. 9 @ FLORIDA ST.
NOV. 16 @ NORTH CAROLINA
NOV. 23 CLEMSON

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

SEP. 2 MEMPHIS ST.
SEP. 14 PENN. ST.
SEP. 21 ARIZONA ST.
SEP. 28 @ OREGON
OCT. 12 @ WASHINGTON ST.
OCT. 19 STANFORD
OCT. 26 @ NOTRE DAME
NOV. 2 @ CALIFORNIA
NOV. 9 WASHINGTON
NOV. 16 @ ARIZONA
NOV. 23 UCLA

SOUTHERN METHODIST

SEP. 7 ARKANSAS @ LITTLE ROCK
SEP. 14 @ VANDERBILT
SEP. 28 BAYLOR
OCT. 5 @ TULANE
OCT. 12 TEXAS TECH
OCT. 19 @ HOUSTON
OCT. 26 TEXAS
NOV. 2 @ TEXAS CHRISTIAN
NOV. 9 RICE
NOV. 23 @ TEXAS A & M
NOV. 30 TULSA

SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI

AUG. 31 DELTA ST.
SEP. 7 @ PITTSBURGH
SEP. 21 COLORADO ST.
SEP. 28 @ LOUISVILLE
OCT. 5 @ AUBURN
OCT. 12 @ MEMPHIS ST.
OCT. 19 TULANE
OCT. 26 @ CINCINNATI
NOV. 2 @ TULSA
NOV. 9 EAST CAROLINA
NOV. 16 @ LOUISIANA TECH

SOUTHWESTERN LA.

AUG. 31 NORTHEAST LA.
SEP. 7 @ CENTRAL MICH.
SEP. 14 @ WYOMING
SEP. 21 @ ARKANSAS
SEP. 28 @ TEXAS A & M
OCT. 5 MIAMI (OHIO)
OCT. 12 TULSA

1991 COLLEGE FOOTBALL SCHEDULE



OCT. 26 LOUISIANA TECH
NOV. 2 @ NORTHERN ILL.
NOV. 9 @ AUBURN
NOV. 16 @ ARKANSAS ST.

STANFORD

SEP. 7 WASHINGTON
SEP. 14 @ ARIZONA
SEP. 28 COLORADO
OCT. 5 NOTRE DAME
OCT. 12 CORNELL
OCT. 19 @ SOUTHERN CAL.
OCT. 26 OREGON ST.
NOV. 2 @ OREGON
NOV. 9 UCLA
NOV. 16 @ WASHINGTON ST.
NOV. 23 CALIFORNIA

SYRACUSE

SEP. 7 VANDERBILT
SEP. 14 @ MARYLAND
SEP. 21 FLORIDA
SEP. 28 @ TULANE
OCT. 5 @ FLORIDA ST.
OCT. 12 EAST CAROLINA
OCT. 19 @ PITTSBURGH
OCT. 26 RUTGERS @ E. RUTHERFORD
NOV. 2 TEMPLE
NOV. 16 BOSTON COLLEGE
NOV. 23 WEST VIRGINIA

TEMPLE

SEP. 7 @ ALABAMA
SEP. 14 @ PITTSBURGH
SEP. 21 @ CLEMSON
SEP. 28 HOWARD
OCT. 5 PENN ST.
OCT. 12 @ WEST VIRGINIA
OCT. 19 NAVY
NOV. 2 @ SYRACUSE
NOV. 9 BOSTON COLLEGE
NOV. 16 @ RUTGERS
NOV. 23 AKRON

TENNESSEE

SEP. 5 @ LOUISVILLE
SEP. 14 UCLA
SEP. 21 MISSISSIPPI ST.
SEP. 28 AUBURN
OCT. 12 @ FLORIDA
OCT. 19 @ ALABAMA
NOV. 2 MEMPHIS ST.
NOV. 9 @ NOTRE DAME
NOV. 16 MISSISSIPPI
NOV. 23 @ KENTUCKY
NOV. 30 VANDERBILT

TEXAS

SEP. 7 @ MISSISSIPPI ST.
SEP. 21 AUBURN
OCT. 5 RICE
OCT. 12 OKLAHOMA @ DALLAS
OCT. 19 ARKANSAS @ LITTLE ROCK
OCT. 26 @ SOUTHERN METHODIST
NOV. 2 TEXAS TECH
NOV. 9 @ HOUSTON
NOV. 16 TEXAS CHRISTIAN
NOV. 23 BAYLOR
NOV. 28 @ TEXAS A&M

UTEP

AUG. 31 NEW MEXICO
SEP. 7 @ BAYLOR

SEP. 14 @ NEW MEXICO ST.
SEP. 21 NORTHWESTERN LA.
SEP. 28 @ WYOMING
OCT. 5 COLORADO ST.
OCT. 12 @ BRIGHAM YOUNG
OCT. 19 SAN DIEGO ST.
OCT. 26 @ AIR FORCE
NOV. 9 UTAH
NOV. 16 LOUISIANA TECH
NOV. 23

TEXAS A&M

SEP. 14 LOUISIANA ST.
SEP. 21 @ TULSA
SEP. 28 SOUTHWESTERN LA.
OCT. 5 @ TEXAS TECH
OCT. 19 @ BAYLOR
OCT. 26 HOUSTON
NOV. 2 @ RICE
NOV. 7 @ TEXAS CHRISTIAN
NOV. 16 ARKANSAS
NOV. 23 SOUTHERN METHODIST
NOV. 28 TEXAS

TEXAS CHRISTIAN

SEP. 7 NEW MEXICO
SEP. 14 BALL ST.
SEP. 21 @ OKLAHOMA ST.
SEP. 28 @ TEXAS TECH
OCT. 5 ARKANSAS
OCT. 19 @ RICE
OCT. 26 @ BAYLOR
NOV. 2 SOUTHERN METHODIST
NOV. 16 @ TEXAS
NOV. 23 HOUSTON

TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY

SEP. 7 CAL ST. FULLERTON
SEP. 14 OREGON
SEP. 21 @ WYOMING
SEP. 28 TEXAS CHRISTIAN
OCT. 5 TEXAS A&M
OCT. 12 @ SOUTHERN METHODIST
OCT. 26 RICE
NOV. 2 @ TEXAS
NOV. 9 ARKANSAS
NOV. 16 @ BAYLOR
NOV. 23 @ HOUSTON

TOLEDO

SEP. 7 KANSAS
SEP. 21 @ WESTERN MICH.
SEP. 28 CENTRAL MICH.
OCT. 5 OHIO
OCT. 12 @ WASHINGTON
OCT. 19 @ BOWLING GREEN
NOV. 2 @ KENT STATE
NOV. 9 BALL ST.
NOV. 16 @ EASTERN MICH.
NOV. 23 NORTHERN ILL.

TULANE

AUG. 31 MISSISSIPPI
SEP. 7 @ FLORIDA ST.
SEP. 14 @ MISSISSIPPI ST.
SEP. 21 RICE
SEP. 28 SYRACUSE
OCT. 5 SOUTHERN METHODIST
OCT. 12 @ ALABAMA
OCT. 19 @ SOUTHERN MISS.
NOV. 2 @ EAST CAROLINA
NOV. 9 NAVY
NOV. 23 LOUISIANA ST.

TULSA

AUG. 31 SOUTHWEST MO. ST.
SEP. 7 OKLAHOMA ST.
SEP. 14 @ KANSAS
SEP. 21 TEXAS A&M
SEP. 28 MIAMI (FLA.)
OCT. 12 @ SOUTHWESTERN LA.
OCT. 26 @ MEMPHIS ST.
NOV. 2 SOUTHERN MISS.
NOV. 16 LOUISVILLE
NOV. 23 OHIO
NOV. 30 @ SOUTHERN METHODIST

UCLA

SEP. 7 BRIGHAM YOUNG
SEP. 14 @ TENNESSEE
SEP. 26 @ SAN DIEGO ST.
OCT. 5 CALIFORNIA
OCT. 12 ARIZONA
OCT. 19 @ OREGON ST.
OCT. 26 @ ARIZONA ST.
NOV. 2 WASHINGTON ST.
NOV. 9 @ STANFORD
NOV. 16 OREGON
NOV. 23 @ SOUTHERN CAL.

UTAH

AUG. 31 UTAH ST.
SEP. 7 @ OREGON ST.
SEP. 14 AIR FORCE
SEP. 21 OREGON
OCT. 5 @ ARIZONA ST.
OCT. 12 @ WYOMING
OCT. 19 COLORADO ST.
OCT. 26 SAN DIEGO ST.
NOV. 2 @ HAWAII
NOV. 9 NEW MEXICO
NOV. 16 @ UTEP
NOV. 23 @ BRIGHAM YOUNG

UTAH STATE

AUG. 31 @ UTAH
SEP. 7 @ NEBRASKA
SEP. 21 @ OKLAHOMA
SEP. 28 SAN JOSE ST.
OCT. 4 @ BRIGHAM YOUNG
OCT. 19 CAL ST. FULLERTON
OCT. 26 @ LONG BEACH ST.
NOV. 2 FRESNO ST.
NOV. 9 @ NEVADA-LAS VEGAS
NOV. 16 PACIFIC
NOV. 23 @ NEW MEXICO ST.

VANDERBILT

SEP. 7 @ SYRACUSE
SEP. 14 SOUTHERN METHODIST
SEP. 21 @ LOUISIANA ST.
SEP. 28 ALABAMA
OCT. 5 @ DUKE
OCT. 12 AUBURN
OCT. 19 GEORGIA
OCT. 26 @ MISSISSIPPI

NOV. 2 @ ARMY
NOV. 9 KENTUCKY
NOV. 30 @ TENNESSEE

VIRGINIA

SEP. 7 @ MARYLAND
SEP. 14 NAVY
SEP. 19 @ GEORGIA TECH
SEP. 28 DUKE
OCT. 5 KANSAS
OCT. 12 @ CLEMSON
OCT. 19 @ NORTH CAROLINA
OCT. 26 WAKE FOREST
NOV. 2 VIRGINIA MILITARY
NOV. 9 @ NORTH CAROLINA ST.
NOV. 23 VIRGINIA TECH

VIRGINIA TECH

AUG. 31 JAMES MADISON
SEP. 7 @ NORTH CAROLINA ST.
SEP. 21 @ SOUTH CAROLINA
SEP. 28 @ OKLAHOMA
OCT. 5 @ WEST VIRGINIA
OCT. 12 FLORIDA ST. @ ORLANDO
OCT. 19 CINCINNATI
OCT. 26 LOUISVILLE
NOV. 9 AKRON
NOV. 16 EAST CAROLINA
NOV. 23 @ VIRGINIA

WAKE FOREST

SEP. 14 WESTERN CAROLINA
SEP. 21 NORTH CAROLINA ST.
SEP. 28 @ NORTHWESTERN
OCT. 5 APPALACHIAN ST.
OCT. 12 @ NORTH CAROLINA
OCT. 19 MARYLAND
OCT. 26 @ VIRGINIA
NOV. 2 @ CLEMSON
NOV. 9 DUKE
NOV. 16 @ GEORGIA TECH
NOV. 23 @ NAVY

WASHINGTON

SEP. 7 @ STANFORD
SEP. 21 @ NEBRASKA
SEP. 28 KANSAS ST.
OCT. 5 ARIZONA
OCT. 12 TOLEDO
OCT. 19 @ CALIFORNIA
OCT. 26 OREGON
NOV. 2 ARIZONA ST.
NOV. 9 @ SOUTHERN CAL.
NOV. 16 @ OREGON ST.
NOV. 23 WASHINGTON ST.

WASHINGTON STATE

SEP. 7 @ OREGON
SEP. 14 FRESNO ST.
SEP. 21 @ OHIO ST.
SEP. 28 @ NEVADA-LAS VEGAS
OCT. 5 OREGON ST.
OCT. 12 SOUTHERN CAL.

OCT. 19 @ ARIZONA ST.
NOV. 2 @ UCLA
NOV. 9 ARIZONA
NOV. 16 STANFORD
NOV. 23 @ WASHINGTON

WEST VIRGINIA

AUG. 31 PITTSBURGH
SEP. 7 BOWLING GREEN
SEP. 14 SOUTH CAROLINA
SEP. 21 @ MARYLAND
OCT. 5 VIRGINIA TECH
OCT. 12 TEMPLE
OCT. 19 @ BOSTON COLLEGE
OCT. 26 @ PENN ST.
NOV. 2 RUTGERS
NOV. 9 @ MIAMI (FLA.)
NOV. 23 @ SYRACUSE

WESTERN MICHIGAN

SEP. 7 AKRON
SEP. 14 @ FLORIDA ST.
SEP. 21 TOLEDO
SEP. 28 OHIO
OCT. 5 @ BALL ST.
OCT. 12 @ NORTHERN ILL.
OCT. 19 @ EASTERN MICH.
OCT. 26 BOWLING GREEN
NOV. 9 MIAMI (OHIO)
NOV. 16 @ CENTRAL MICH.
NOV. 23 KENT ST.

WISCONSIN

SEP. 14 WESTERN ILL.
SEP. 21 IOWA ST.
SEP. 28 EASTERN MICH.
OCT. 5 @ OHIO ST.
OCT. 12 IOWA
OCT. 19 @ PURDUE
OCT. 26 INDIANA
NOV. 2 @ ILLINOIS
NOV. 9 MICHIGAN ST.
NOV. 16 @ MINNESOTA
NOV. 23 NORTHWESTERN

WYOMING

AUG. 31 HAWAII
SEP. 7 @ COLORADO
SEP. 14 SOUTHWESTERN LA.
SEP. 21 TEXAS TECH
SEP. 28 UTEP
OCT. 5 @ AIR FORCE
OCT. 12 UTAH
OCT. 19 @ NEW MEXICO
OCT. 26 COLORADO ST.
NOV. 2 @ SAN DIEGO ST.
NOV. 9 @ BRIGHAM YOUNG



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THE SPORT 1991 COLLEGE FOOTBALL PREVIEW

HERE'S OUR TOP 40, AND IT ALL STARTS WITH THE KLINGLER-LED COUGARS

By Craig Ellenport

1 HOUSTON "I'm very, very anxious to unleash this bunch," says Houston head coach John Jenkins. And why not? His Cougars are eligible for postseason play after two years of probation, and their first New Year's Day game since 1985 will be a Cotton Bowl affair to decide the national championship.

"The last two years...there wasn't a single player who felt sorry for himself," says Jenkins, the mastermind behind Houston's run 'n' shoot attack. "Now the slate is clean, and I can't tell you how hungry these guys are."

Jenkins is quick to remind anyone willing to listen that last year was a rebuilding season for Houston. Some rebuilding season. The Cougars and their space-age offense rolled to a 10-1 record, losing only to Southwest Conference champion Texas. David Klingler's meteoric year at quarterback has been well documented—5,140 yards passing and 54 touchdowns were two of his 33 NCAA records—and he'll be surrounded by enough talent in '91 to repeat those numbers and capture the Heisman Trophy.

The offense should put up 40-something points a game, and a defense that was young and green last year will be improved. The secondary, led by FS Jerry Parks, and the linebacking corps, buoyed by sophomore Ryan McCoy, suddenly look like team strengths.

With Houston's toughest SWC foes, Texas and Baylor, slated to play in the Astrodome this season, all that stands between the Cougars and an undefeated record is an early season trip to Miami. The bet here is that a young Hurricanes defense will not be able to weather Houston's offensive storm. Jenkins and company will ring in the new year atop the polls.

2 WASHINGTON Most title contenders would fall by the wayside if you took away their starting quarterback, but not the Huskies. Not with this defense.

Don James entered spring practice with a team that needed only to find a new starter at running back and work out some minor kinks. Then QB Mark Brunell tore up his knee. Brunell was the perfect triggerman for Washington's well-balanced attack; he was unspectacular but made very few mistakes. As long as Billy Joe Hobert is adequate, the Huskies remain the class of a powerful Pac-10 Conference. The offensive line is big and experienced, the receivers are very good, and the running game should be explosive with big-play RB Beno Bryant. Then there's that defense.

SPORT preseason All-American DL Steve Emtman leads the bull rush, and the linebacking corps is so loaded that James Clif-

David Klingler will be surrounded by enough talent at Houston to grab himself a Heisman Trophy and the Cougars a national championship.

THE RACE TO OCTOBER

TUESDAY, WEDNESDAY, FRIDAY AND SUNDAY NIGHTS.

ford—who led the Pac-10 in tackles two years ago but missed the '90 season with an injury—might not crack the starting lineup. This is a group that allowed less than 70 rushing yards a game playing in a conference loaded with talented running backs.

3 FLORIDA STATE There is no more likable coach in college football than Bobby Bowden—and there may be no more talented team this year than the Seminoles—but if he hasn't won a national championship yet, there's no reason to believe he ever will.

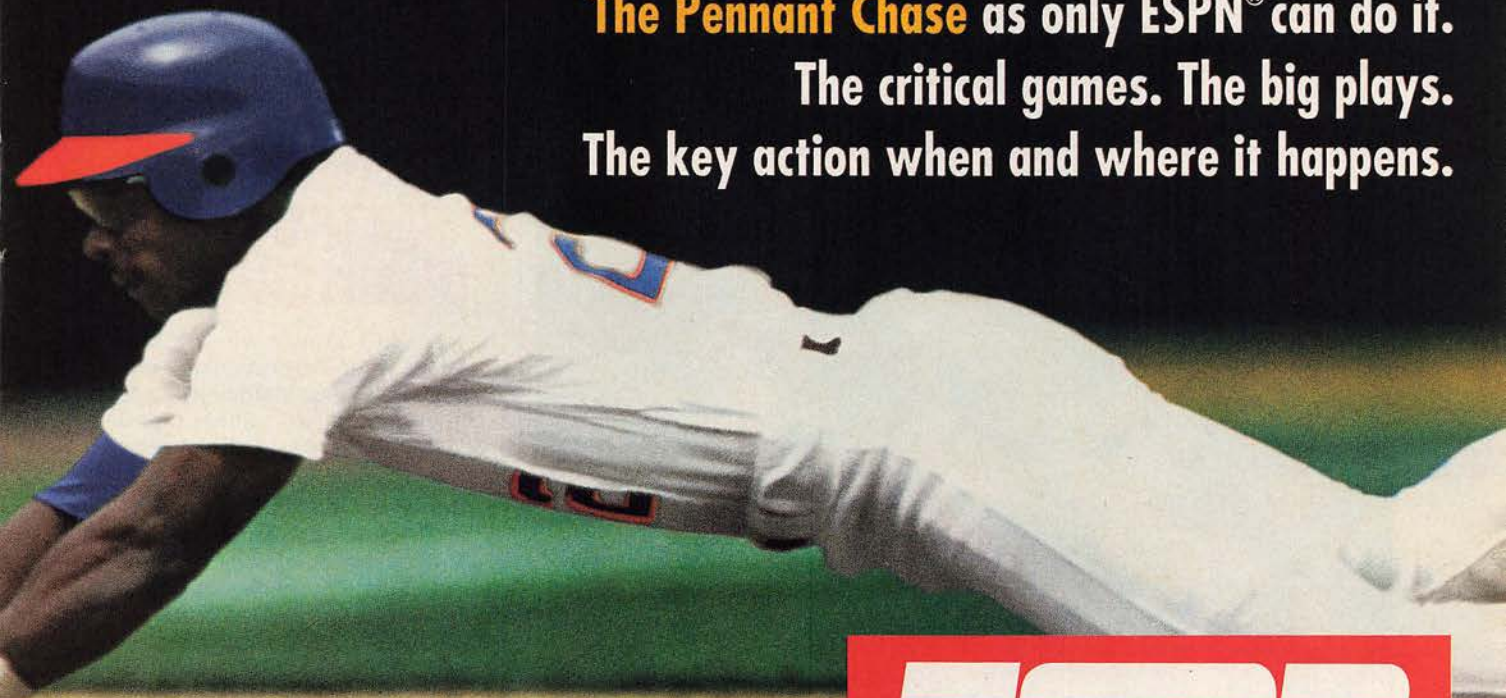
A team that went 10-2 while starting only five seniors last season, the Seminoles are the popular pick for No. 1 in '91. The offense is as potent as ever, and the defense features some heavy hitters. Florida State was perhaps the hottest team in the country when the final bell rang last year, and the losses are minimal. So what's wrong?

It isn't easy criticizing a guy whose lifetime record is 205-74-3. But Bowden has been in position for a title run before and has fallen short. When his 1988 team was a consensus preseason No. 1, it was routed by Miami on opening day,



Georgia Tech's Shawn Jones is a multipurpose threat who's still improving. He'll help take the defending co-champs to No. 2 in the nation.

BRUCE L. SCHWARTZMAN



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31-0. His penchant for the trick play may have cost his team a piece of last year's championship when a fumblerooskie really was fumbled against Auburn, helping the Tigers to a come-from-behind 20-17 victory.

The Seminoles could avoid such mishaps in '91 and cruise to the title. Of course, they do have to get by an early season trip to Michigan and the traditional battle against Miami. We think they'll fall short once again.

4 GEORGIA TECH The Rambling Wreck's return to national prominence may have been sudden, but it was certainly no fluke. Tech's methodical destruction of Nebraska in the Florida Citrus Bowl served notice that this is a team capable of knocking off the big boys, and all the stars from last year's show are back.

QB Shawn Jones is a multipurpose threat who continues to improve, and he's complemented by a pair of big-play receivers. The defense, which didn't allow a TD last year until the fourth quarter of its fifth game, is led by two SPORT preseason All-Americans, LB Marco Coleman and DB Ken Swilling.

The Yellow Jackets face a stiff early test when they meet Penn State in the Kickoff Classic. With a talented team

and time to prepare, Joe Paterno poses one of only two threats on Tech's schedule. The other is a trip to Clemson, where an angry Tigers squad wants to regain its status as ACC kingpin.

5 MICHIGAN No team with three losses last year came as close as Michigan did to posting an undefeated record. There was an ill-advised pass late in the fourth quarter of the Notre Dame game, a blown call at the end of the Michigan State contest and then a last-minute loss to Iowa. Three losses by a combined total of six points.

If the Wolverines don't win a national title in '91, they won't be much further from it than last year.

Gary Moeller's second season as Bo Schembechler's replacement finds a team absolutely loaded with talent. QB Elvis Grbac operates behind a mammoth offensive line that will help make sophomore RB Ricky Powers look like a senior. WR Desmond Howard is one of the best in the college game. The defense is not awesome, but it's more than solid enough to send Michigan packing for the Rose Bowl.

The Wolverines face Florida State and Notre Dame in September, and if they are to earn this lofty ranking, they must win at least one of those games.

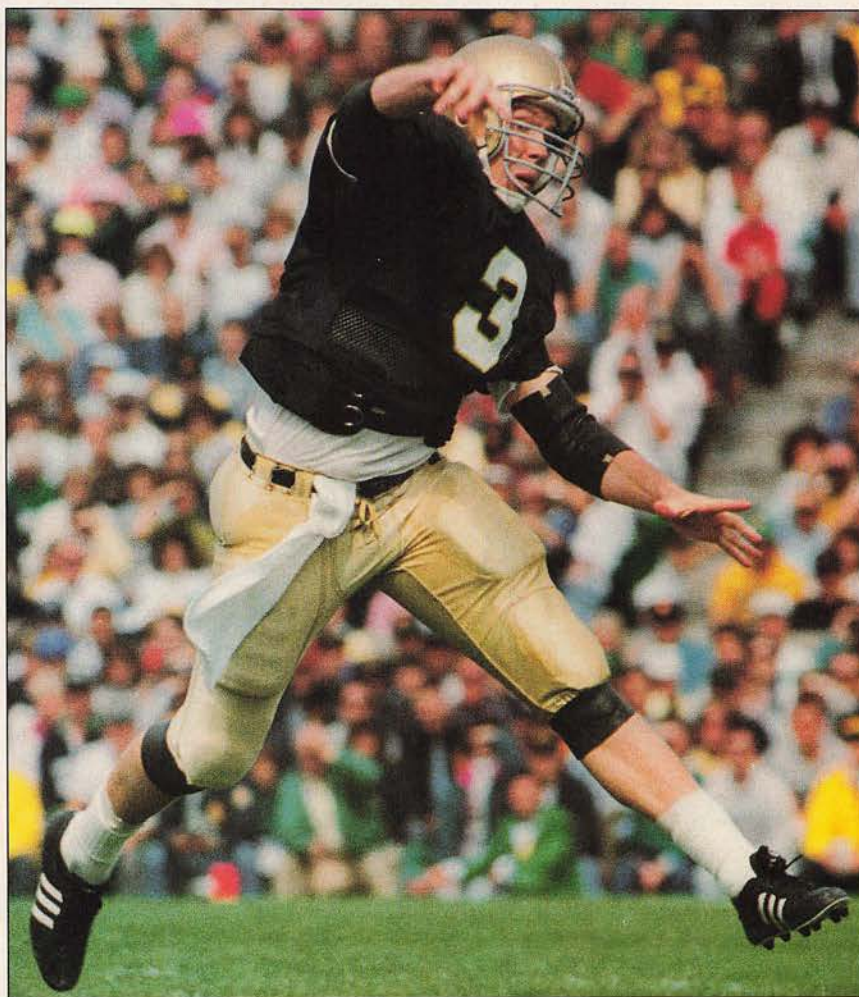
Win both, and they're No. 1.

6 PENN STATE In Paterno, we trust. That's the outlook for Penn State faithful who see a team that was hit hard by losses at running back and on the offensive line. Before losing to Florida State in the Blockbuster Bowl, the Nittany Lions were the hottest team in the nation—winners of nine straight, including an upset of Notre Dame in South Bend. Despite the vacancies, Joe Paterno has enough returning talent with which to work his magic.

Crucial to the Lions' success is Tony Sacca's continued improvement at quarterback. Sacca, now a senior, showed flashes of greatness last season but has yet to fulfill his potential on a consistent basis. With veteran back-up Tom Bill no longer around, it's do or die with Sacca. In case you were wondering, you don't have to worry about Penn State's defense. It's the usual.

The Nittany Lions' path is a treacherous one, however, as they open against Georgia Tech in the Kickoff Classic, play host to BYU and Notre Dame and face Miami and USC on the road.

7 NOTRE DAME Forget about the players they lost and you'll realize that the Fighting Irish still have plenty of talent.



ED BALL/ST. LOUIS POST-DEMOCRAT

Notre Dame has plenty left for a No. 7 finish after losing the Rocket; QB Rick Mirer can mix it up with the best of 'em.

First-round draft pick Todd Lyght was hampered by injuries for part of last season, as was second-rounder Chris Zorich. Raghib "Rocket" Ismail, dangerous as he was, only served last season to complicate what was supposed to be a transitional year for the offense.

QB Rick Mirer proved in his first year as the starter that he can mix up the option and drop-back attacks with efficiency, and running backs such as Rodney Culver, Tony Brooks and Jerome Bettis will keep Notre Dame near the top of the rushing charts all season. Lou Holtz and company liked what they saw this spring from a corps of young defenders who have the ability to get by without Zorich, Lyght and LB Michael Stonebreaker; whether they play with the same heart and intensity as those three will determine how far the Irish go.

The schedule, still one of the toughest around, is that much easier without Miami on it. If you're looking for another rocket, keep an eye on Willie Clark. Returning to running back after a stint at safety last season, Clark turned a lot of heads this spring with his Rocket-like

speed. He should turn heads in the fall.

8 COLORADO The Buffaloes might be the greatest mystery on this list of America's finest. Coach Bill McCartney has rewritten Big Eight history by guiding Colorado to back-to-back Orange Bowl trips, and he's developed the football program in Boulder to the point where Oklahoma and Nebraska must move over and make room on that perch atop the rest of the conference. But can McCartney make a third trip to Miami with the nucleus of last year's co-national championship team now in the NFL?

An even bigger question could be whether or not QB Darian Hagan can successfully return from knee surgery. Held out of spring drills, his knee won't be tested on the field until the fall. Nevertheless, we think the Buffaloes have what it takes to hold off advances from the Sooners and Cornhuskers.

The marquee names, such as Bieniemy, Williams and McGhee, may have taken their acts to the pros, but the result of three stellar recruiting classes is

a top-notch Colorado defense.

Oklahoma and Nebraska can attest that stopping the run is tantamount to

TEAMS WITHOUT A QUARTERBACK

It's not easy to win football games without a proven quarterback, and these teams—despite having excellent talent up and down the roster—do not have a proven quarterback:

Alabama One of the few teams that is good enough to be highly ranked despite the lack of a known quantity calling the shots, the Tide might be national title contenders if Gary Hollingsworth were still around. His back-up, Danny Woodson, showed little promise last season, which is why redshirt freshman Jay Barker is getting a long look.

Oregon Another team with Top 25 aspirations, the Ducks will rely on a strong defense now that Bill Musgrave has taken his act to the NFL. Oregon's got plenty of talent, but you can't overlook this tidbit: Musgrave posted a 25-10 record as the Ducks' starting quarterback. That makes Oregon 3-9 the last four years when Musgrave wasn't healthy.

Maryland Joe Krivak's club rose from oblivion last season in time to save his job, but the improving Terrapins will dearly miss Scott Zolak. His replacement, James Sandwisch, attempted just 22 passes in 1990.

Temple The Owls went from 1-10 in 1989 to 7-4 last season, but the departure of quarterback Matt Baker leaves a void in both talent and leadership that will not be filled this season.

Arizona State The defense is solid, the running backs look good, and coach Larry Marmie calls Eric Guliford one of the best receivers he's ever seen. But the two quarterbacks who are vying to replace Paul Justin combined to complete barely 42 percent of their passes along with nine interceptions and just one touchdown last year.

winning in the Big Eight. Nose guard Joel Steed heads up a strong and deep defensive line that should stuff the run with great proficiency. If Hagan comes back, the Buffs can really do some damage. If not, it says here that Colorado is still capable of eight or nine wins.

BRUCE SCHWARTZMAN

9 TENNESSEE The Volunteers played the very first and last games of the 1990 season, and what a long, strange trip it was.

On the way to a nine-win season, Johnny Majors' team broke in a young defense that now is ready to play a big role in Tennessee's success. SPORT preseason All-American Dale Carter looms in the secondary as a nemesis for opposing quarterbacks. An overachieving group of linebackers backs up quality depth on the line. Don't cry for the offense just because three of its alumni were plucked in the first round of the NFL draft. Andy Kelly is a solid quarterback who does some of his best work when the game is on the line, and his primary target is Tennessee's other SPORT preseason All-American, WR Carl Pickens.

If the Vols are to make a return visit to the Sugar Bowl this season, they must beat Auburn at home because, after that, they face back-to-back road con-



With DE Alonzo Spellman academically questionable, LB Steve Tovar will have to smother his share of Ohio State's opponents to help the Buckeyes reach No. 13.

tests against Florida and Alabama.

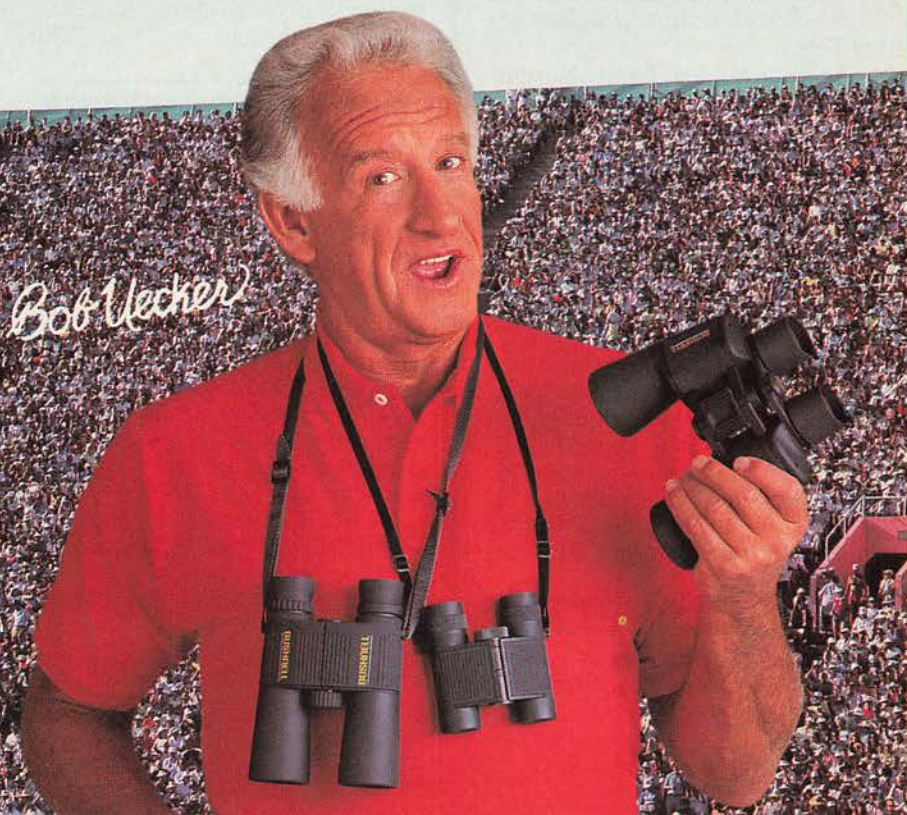
10 SYRACUSE If Dick MacPherson hadn't left Syracuse to take the New England Patriots coaching job, this pick might not be so

outrageous. The Orangemen prospered during MacPherson's 10-year stint, and the future appears even brighter.

New head coach Paul Pasqualoni has one major hole to fill—he must replace four starters on the offensive line.

COLLEGE FOOTBALL PREVIEW

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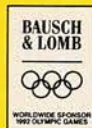
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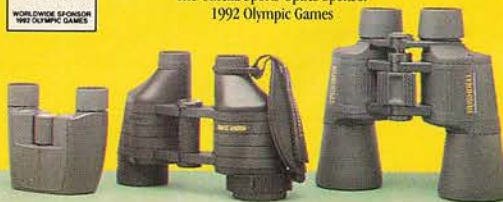
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ROBERT BECK

Mazio Royster is the latest in a long line of USC 1,000-yard tailbacks, and he'll try to rush the Trojans to No. 14.

After that, he's got a young team that showed great promise last season. Option quarterback Marvin Graves is at least as exciting as former Syracuse QB Don McPherson, who led the Orange to an unbeaten season in 1987. Defensively, tackle George Rooks and LB Dan Conley lead a group that shut out Arizona in the Aloha Bowl last year.

What makes Pasqualoni's inaugural campaign more propitious is a schedule that features just one heavy hitter (Florida State). If Syracuse beats Florida in the Carrierdome on September 21, anything less than an eight-win season would be surprising.

11 MIAMI (FLA.) There is as much talent in Coral Gables this season as there was last year, when Miami capped a 10-2 season with a 46-3 rout of Texas in the Cotton Bowl. But much of it is unproven.

Seventeen players who contributed to a remarkable 44-4 record over the past four seasons have departed, including key players at every offensive and defensive position.

Of course, Miami turned over 17 seniors in 1987. Jimmy Johnson won a national championship that year.

QB Gino Torretta takes over the offensive reins, and he's got plenty of experience. Stephen McGuire is a force at running back, and the stable of receivers, led by Lamar Thomas, is as explosive as always. Depth at linebacker and in the secondary is good; the Miami coaching staff expects safety Darryl Williams to emerge as a superstar.

But there's a new marshal in town—

athletic director Dave Maggard. Miami's attempt to clean up its image last year was trashed by an astonishing 202 penalty yards in the Cotton Bowl, so Maggard might rather see the Hurricanes lose a game or two at their best behavior than go undefeated and unrestrained. The 'Canes are still a force to be reckoned with, but they're in danger of losing more than two games for the first time since 1984.

12 OKLAHOMA Like Houston, Oklahoma hopes to make its first season off probation one to cherish.

The Sooners teased the Norman faithful last year by winning their first five games by a combined score of 200-68. Then they lost three straight games for the first time since 1965 (when, incidentally, they turned the trick twice). Despite that dubious achievement, Gary Gibbs embarks on his third season at the Sooners helm armed with his best team yet and a schedule more befitting of arch-rival Nebraska.

Sophomore QB Cale Gundy is the best pure passer OU has had in years, meaning the offensive attack will be more balanced. The defense is led by linebackers Joe Bowden and Chris Wilson and strong safety Jason Belser, but the front line is a question, and depth all around is not up to normal OU standards.

Nevertheless, Texas, Colorado and Nebraska are the only teams capable of making the Sooners sweat, thus Gibbs will earn his first New Year's Day bowl game as a head coach.

WHO'S MISSING

We're not saying that SPORT's Top 40 isn't the most thorough, accurate and comprehensive preseason list around, but should any of our teams happen to stumble, here are a few teams poised to take their places:

Arizona The Wildcats' 28-0 loss to Syracuse in the Aloha Bowl scared us off a bit, but Dick Tomey's squad is still strong.

Colorado State Earle Bruce brought Big Ten football to the WAC. His Rams will continue to grind it out in a pass-happy conference.

Indiana Vaughn Dunbar is one of the best running backs in the nation. The defense is good, and if a quarterback emerges, the Hoosiers could surprise.

Kansas or Missouri The Jayhawks and Tigers will battle for fourth place in the Big Eight, and the winner could play in a bowl game.

Rutgers Yes, Rutgers. Doug Graber's improving squad is a few years away, but a relatively easy schedule could hasten the progress.

TCU or Texas Tech Two potent offenses, two questionable defenses. Like Kansas and Missouri, the winner between these teams is a possible bowl team. —C.E.

13 OHIO STATE The heat is on John Cooper. The general belief is that it's goodbye Columbus if the beleaguered head coach doesn't win at least eight games in '91. And ya know what? If the Buckeyes stay relatively healthy, Cooper will win eight games with his eyes closed.

Here's why: The Buckeyes' defense boasts SPORT preseason All-American DE Alonzo Spellman and standout LB Steve Tovar, they've got a huge offensive line blocking for a backfield that's chock full of all-star running talent, and they've got a schedule that's tailor-made for a coach fighting to save his job.

Ohio State essentially has eight home games (this includes a "neutral-site" game against Northwestern in Cleveland, which doesn't sound very neutral to us), and that means Cooper



Sophomore Stan White is coming off a stellar first season for the Tigers. Auburn's outlook: No. 21.

should be in great shape when he travels to Ann Arbor for the finale against Michigan.

Two players who will have a big say in Cooper's fate are RB Carlos Snow and TE Jeff Ellis, both potential superstars who are coming back from injuries. Snow, a one-time Heisman candidate, missed the entire '90 season but looked as good as ever in spring drills.

14 USC The good news for USC: Todd Marinovich is gone. The bad news for USC: Todd Marinovich is gone.

Larry Smith's biggest headache of a year ago has taken his act to the NFL, but that leaves the Trojans with just one experienced quarterback on the roster—and that experience consists of three snaps from center and zero pass attempts.

Sophomore Reggie Perry, the QB in question, will share the starting job with Curtis Conway, a receiver who played QB in high school. Regardless of who lines up under center, the Trojans will try to emulate the Super Bowl champion New York Giants—they'll grind it out on offense with 1,000-yard RB Mazio Royster and veteran FB Scott Lockwood, and a young defense has the potential to be dominant. Kurt Barber and Willie McGinest are big-play LBs, Terry McDaniels anchors the defensive line,

and safety Lamont Hollinquest, an academic casualty in 1990, is flashing superstar potential.

15 MICHIGAN STATE The Heisman Trophy tandem of RB Tico Duckett and WR Courtney Hawkins will give George Perles an offense capable of scoring against anyone. Since the folks in East Lansing always manage to field a mercilese defense, the Spartans have a chance to go far... if they can just avoid their trademark slow start.

Michigan State has lost at least two of its first five games every season since 1967. With Notre Dame and Michigan highlighting the first half of the schedule this year, that trend should continue. But the Spartans might lose only one game after that—a road test vs. Ohio State—so eight wins should be expected.

The defense, which held the likes of Notre Dame, Iowa, Illinois and USC to an average of less than 19 points last year, is paced by bold MLB Chuck Bulough and DE Bill Johnson, a future pro. Critical to the Spartans' success is the performance of quarterback Bret Johnson, a one-time starter at UCLA.

16 ALABAMA In his first year as coach of the Tide, Gene Stallings survived a shocking 0-3 start long enough to win seven games—including the all-important battle with Auburn. Just when he thought he was in the clear, however, Louisville shocked him again, ambushing the Tide in the Fiesta Bowl to the tune of 34-7.

The always-tough Tide fans might not soon forget that embarrassment, but we're willing to chalk it up as a fluke. A defense that finished third in the nation last season and allowed less than 12 points a game could be even better in '91. Inside LBs John Sullins and Derrick Oden are all over the place, and NG Robert Stewart anchors the line. The offense welcomes back Heisman hopeful Siran Stacy, a 1,000-yard rusher who went down with a knee injury in the first week of last season. They say he's 100 percent healthy, and that should take a lot of pressure off the probable new QB, redshirt freshman Jay Barker.

It will take some time for the offense to get in gear, but the Tide only faces one major challenge (Florida) during the first half of the season. If 'Bama puts it all together by the time it plays Tennessee and Auburn, it could be tasting Sugar.

17 IOWA While fictional college coach Hayden Fox was going for the slapstick yucks on

prime-time television, real-life coach Hayden Fry was getting the last laugh around the Big Ten.

Conference foes won't soon underestimate Fry again. He has, after all, more wins than all other active Division I-A coaches except Paterno and Bowden. Since Fry reminded us last year that Iowa is a program to be reckoned with—as he took the Hawkeyes to the Rose Bowl when nobody expected him to—we're confident he can overcome some key losses and keep his team

QUARTERBACKS WITHOUT A TEAM

A great quarterback usually can carry his team, but sometimes the team is so bad, it just doesn't want to budge. Here are a few superior signal callers who could be weighed down by their inferior supporting casts:

Eric Hunter, Purdue His great athleticism and rifle arm strike fear into defensive backs, but with a weak Boilermakers offensive line and no running game, Hunter becomes the hunted by opposing pass rushers.

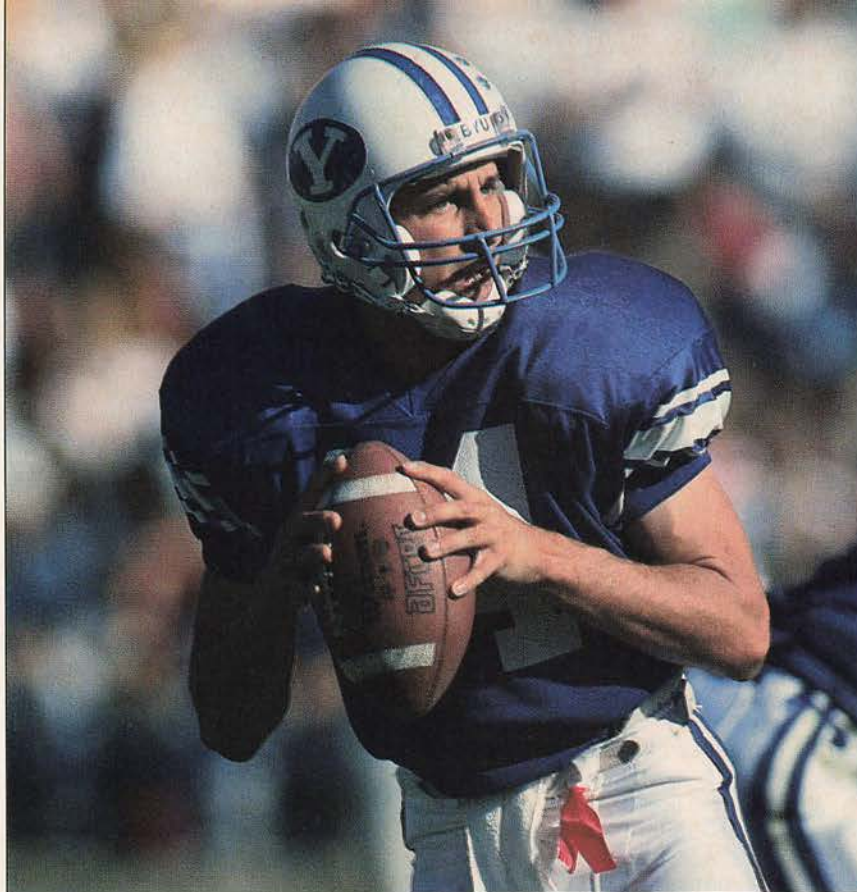
Glenn Foley, Boston College Miami defensive coordinator Sonny Lubick labeled Foley one of the most impressive quarterbacks the Hurricanes faced last season, but the Eagles don't have the claws to back up their quarterback.

Drew Bledsoe, Washington State Only a sophomore, Bledsoe still has time for the Cougars to catch up with his talent. Draft experts list him as a future pro, but Washington State isn't going anywhere this season.

David Brown, Duke Though he's been a back-up most of his collegiate career, Brown has thrown 22 TDs and possesses pro size and potential. You can't say that for the rest of the Blue Devils squad.

Willie McMillian, Army He has run Army's wishbone offense to perfection, but running back Mike Mayweather got all the credit when the Cadets were good. Mayweather has moved on, and so has most of the offensive line.

—C.E.



Heisman winner Ty Detmer won't have last season's supporting cast, but he still has his golden arm and superb coach LaVell Edwards. BYU will finish at No. 24.

among the nation's elite.

Forget about Nick Bell. It was a big offensive line and a balanced attack led by quarterback Matt Rodgers that enabled Iowa to rush for a school-record 2,699 yards in 1990. Four starting linemen return to protect Rodgers, who very quietly has become one of the better QBs in America. A defense that gave up less than 100 rushing yards a game last year is bolstered by an imposing front line.

The Hawkeyes have a made-to-order schedule that features easy non-conference games and Michigan at home—and it doesn't hurt that Michigan State is not on the slate. Nine wins is a legitimate expectation.

18 CLEMSON It's gone almost unnoticed that Clemson has reeled off four straight 10-2 seasons. The Tigers didn't lose a step in their first year under head coach Ken Hatfield. Or did they?

Long regarded as the team to beat by contenders for the ACC throne, Clemson was crowned by both Georgia Tech and Virginia last season. The Tigers may have put on the most impressive bowl performance last season, whipping Illinois, 30-0, in the Hall of Fame Bowl, but they enter the '91 campaign with a real dogfight on their hands

within the conference.

SPORT preseason All-American LB Levon Kirkland spearheads a defense that ranked first in the nation last year and held seven teams to fewer than 10 points. The running attack, paced by sophomore Ronald Williams, will be among the nation's best.

So where's the weakness? It's in a passing game that gets the job done most of the time but didn't show up in the crunch last season. Quarterback DeChane Cameron, in the losses to Virginia and Georgia Tech, was a combined 15 of 45 for 176 yards, no TDs and one interception. The Tigers will go 10-2 again this season, but only because the schedule is accommodating.

19 UCLA Back-to-back losing seasons in Westwood? Wow, man, L.A. really is a strange place.

Considering Terry Donahue's track record at UCLA, everyone expected the Bruins to bounce back last year (including us). After they stumbled again, going 5-6, everyone is saying, "OK, this time they really will bounce back."

Here's why they're right: Sophomore QB Tommy Maddox is a superstar, and the young studs on defense are ready to put forth a more consistent effort.

Maddox rode in on a white horse two

MITCHELL B. REBEL

weeks into last season and emerged as the next great Bruins passer. Scouts may love his rifle arm, but it's his poise and leadership ability that will make the difference for a team that went to the Rose Bowl three times from 1982 to '85 but hasn't been back since.

20 NEBRASKA Tom Osborne heard the voices of concern after last year's disappointing finish. During spring drills, he talked of opening up his offense just a bit, ever so gently tossing caution to the wind.

Terrific. Problem is, it's the defense that needs work. The Cornhuskers gave up 45 points apiece to Georgia Tech and Oklahoma in their last two games, and they saw Colorado score 27 points in the fourth quarter to squash their Orange Bowl aspirations. Now consider that seven defensive starters are lost from 1990—including the third and fourth overall picks in the NFL draft, CB Bruce Pickens and LB Mike Croel—and you've got to wonder if Nebraska can get it done in '91.

The guy to watch in Lincoln this year is TE Johnny Mitchell, a sophomore who specializes in the big play. Fellow sophomore Derek Brown could surprise at I-back.

You can't criticize Nebraska for having a powder-puff schedule, because Washington comes to town early. But it won't be hard enough to prevent the Huskers from winning eight or nine games.

21 AUBURN Only at places such as Auburn does an 8-3-1 season constitute a letdown. And when such teams get mad, their opponents usually are in for a beating.

Word in Tiger country is that some of Auburn's seniors got a tad full of themselves last season, and the result was Pat Dye's first pre-New Year's Day bowl game since 1984. There was no excuse for a loss to Southern Miss and close calls against Louisiana Tech and Mississippi State.

The '91 Tigers will feature the standard hard-hitting defense, while the offense promises to produce some fireworks. The new offensive coordinator is Tommy Bowden—Bobby's son—and his quarterback is sophomore Stan White, who's coming off a stellar debut season. With a veteran offensive line and a deep receiving corps, the Tigers will win more games through the air than they have in years.

22 FLORIDA The Gators are clawing their way back to the level of state rivals Miami and Florida State. They thought they were there last season until the Seminoles

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

The argument against a college football playoff is simple. With the utmost importance placed on the regular season, every Saturday is like sudden-death elimination for that mythical national championship.

Keeping this in mind, here is your guide to the 1991 college football "playoffs"—key games that will have a huge impact on the battle for No. 1:

AUGUST 28

Georgia Tech vs. Penn State—Tech begins defense of its half of the national championship in the Kickoff Classic. This and the Clemson game (Sept. 28) are the only games the Jackets won't be heavily favored to win.

AUGUST 29

Florida State at Brigham Young—The Seminoles should manhandle BYU in the Pigskin Classic, but two reminders: Florida State has a history of starting slow, and the Cougars shocked Miami early last season.

SEPTEMBER 7

Washington at Stanford—The Huskies are the class of the Pac-10, but Stanford is a comer that could throw the Rose Bowl race wide open with an upset here.

SEPTEMBER 12

Houston at Miami—Two things happen if the Cougars can pull off a Thursday-night upset of the Hurricanes: Houston becomes a very safe bet to go undefeated, and David Klingler locks up the Heisman Trophy.

SEPTEMBER 14

Alabama at Florida—Alabama's got a powder-puff schedule, and the explosive Gators provide the Tide with its only major test until an October 19 meeting with Tennessee.

SEPTEMBER 21

Washington at Nebraska—After last year's embarrassing finish, Nebraska needs a win here to re-establish itself as one of the nation's elite.

Auburn at Texas—A couple of heavy hitters who aren't as good as people might think. It's a must-win game for both teams if they aspire to crack the top 10.

SEPTEMBER 28

Florida State at Michigan—This could be the marquee game of the year. The combined potential of these

two teams is astronomical, and if the winner doesn't go undefeated the rest of the way, it would be a surprise.

Georgia Tech at Clemson—Another match-up in which the winner has a terrific chance of going undefeated.

OCTOBER 5

Syracuse at Florida State—After the previous week's battle with Michigan, the Seminoles could be ripe for the



Miami's Stephen McGuire

picking. . .and the Orangemen have an abundance of young talent.

Baylor at Houston—Baylor is an underrated team that could sneak into the Cotton Bowl with an upset here.

OCTOBER 12

Penn State at Miami—The Hurricanes and Nittany Lions combined for five national titles in the '80s, so this rematch of the 1987 Fiesta Bowl will generate loads of publicity. The winner is back in the title hunt.

Michigan at Michigan State—As is usually the case, more than state bragging rights are at stake here.

OCTOBER 19

Colorado at Oklahoma—It would be a big surprise if Oklahoma isn't undefeated going into this game. A win over Colorado means that Nebraska is the only obstacle in the Sooners' bid for a perfect record.

OCTOBER 26

USC at Notre Dame—National title hopes aside, this game is always worth the price of admission. The

Trojans are being taken a bit lightly this season, but they'll give the Irish a tough battle.

NOVEMBER 2

Nebraska at Colorado—Two teams whose easy schedules give them the potential for greatness. The winner of this game can do no worse than 9-2 and could be undefeated.

Florida at Auburn—If Florida is able to hold off Alabama and Tennessee in home games earlier in the season, then this game would lock up a Sugar Bowl berth for the Gators.

NOVEMBER 9

Washington at USC—Nobody knew just how good the Huskies were last year until they crushed the Trojans, 31-0. Revenge for USC and the last challenge for the Huskies highlight this one.

UCLA at Stanford—The Bruins have an advantage over other Pac-10 teams this season in that Washington isn't on the schedule. So a win over Stanford puts them in the thick of the Rose Bowl race.

NOVEMBER 16

Miami at Florida State—Miami's got only three real challenges on the schedule, and this is the third. This is the latest date these great rivals have met in a season since 1983, adding to the suspense.

Notre Dame at Penn State—Tough schedules could knock both of these teams out of title contention by this time, but you never know. The Irish were No. 1 when Penn State beat them last year.

NOVEMBER 23

Ohio State at Michigan—The last of only three road games for the Buckeyes in '91, this could be the only real tough game on Ohio State's schedule.

UCLA at USC—Last year's game, in which Todd Marinovich threw a game-winning TD pass with seconds remaining, was an absolute classic. If Washington stumbles somewhere, this is for the Rose Bowl.

NOVEMBER 29

Oklahoma at Nebraska—The Sooners made cornmeal out of the Huskers last year, and that doesn't happen in a rivalry such as this without some serious repercussions.

—C.E.

THE SPORT HEISMAN HANDICAP

BYU quarterback Ty Detmer, opting to stay in school after winning the 1990 Heisman Trophy, is the first player with an opportunity to repeat since Billy Sims in 1979—but he strangely enough finds himself an underdog in the race.

Why is that? Well, hours after winning the Heisman, Detmer threw four interceptions in an upset loss to Hawaii. Then in the Holiday Bowl, the Texas A&M defense pounded him into submission—dislocating both his shoulders in the process—and ended Detmer's NCAA-record string of consecutive 300-yard passing games.

Here's the field for the '91 Heisman race:

THE FAVORITE

David Klingler, Houston A day before Detmer tossed completions to the Hawaii defense, Klingler surpassed an NCAA record in Tokyo—he passed for an unbelievable 716 yards against Arizona State. At first, nobody wanted to believe that Andre Ware's replacement as triggerman for Houston's run 'n' shoot offense could be as good, but Klingler put up numbers that just couldn't be ignored. If he comes close to the 5,140 yards and 54 touchdowns he posted last season, the Heisman is his.

STRONG CONTENDERS

Shawn Jones, Georgia Tech The Ramblin' Wreck signal caller has everything going for him—great running skills, a strong arm, improving accuracy and a superb supporting cast. What's more important is the attention gained from sharing the national championship last year and the fact that Tech will again be in the thick of the title hunt.

Glyn Milburn, Stanford, and Russell White, California Cal plays Stanford on November 23 in a game

that will basically serve as an elimination round for the Heisman. One of these guys will lead his team to victory here, and his name will be on a lot of Heisman ballots put in the mail the following day. Milburn, the most versatile threat in the nation, racked up 2,222 all-purpose yards last season. White is coming off a spectacular sophomore campaign in which he rushed for 1,000 yards despite sharing the starting tailback job. He's a perfect blend of size, speed and superslick moves who will win the Heisman before he's through.

TWO-HEADED HEISMAN

Tico Duckett and Courtney Hawkins, Michigan State If the Heisman could go to a pair of players from one team, Michigan State would have it wrapped up. The sports information folks in East Lansing didn't have the heart to promote just one of their offensive dynamos, so they'll get equal time in the press, if not on the field. Duckett is an obvious front-runner because he is the leading returning ground-gainer in the nation. A strong runner with good speed, Duckett rushed for 1,376 yards as a sophomore in 1990. Hawkins, who was sidelined much of last year with a broken collarbone, is one of the nation's premier receivers—a big-play type who also excels on kick returns.

AUTOMATIC CANDIDATES

Mazio Royster, USC, and Rick Mirer, Notre Dame Hmm, a Trojans tailback and an Irish quarterback. Those labels alone give Royster and Mirer a head start among the contenders. Royster might only be the third-best running back in his conference, but he figures to get more attention at Southern Cal than White and Milburn will at Cal and Stanford, respectively. Royster rolled up 1,043 yards rushing as a sophomore last year. He's not

the flashiest guy around, but his straight-ahead style—behind USC's offensive line—will help him put up Heisman-like numbers. Mirer, believe it or not, will probably benefit from the departure of Raghib Ismail. The transition from the run-oriented style of Tony Rice to the more balanced attack led by Mirer was hindered by the constant attempts to get the ball into Ismail's hands. Mirer's numbers won't knock you out (1,824 yards, eight TDs in '90), but he's a smart kid who makes few mistakes. He'll be on national TV every week too.

FROM HOTSHOT TO LONG SHOT

Ty Detmer, BYU The Heisman incumbent really has only one chance to win this thing—he must shock Florida State the way he shocked Miami last season. Detmer's finish to the '90 season had Heisman voters second-guessing themselves, and it would take a stunning upset over the Seminoles in the August 29 Pigskin Classic to put him right back on top.

TWO WORTH CONSIDERING

Tommy Maddox, UCLA It never hurts to be a young gun in Los Angeles, and if this is the year that UCLA returns to national prominence, Maddox will play a key role. The sophomore from Texas has a rifle arm and is never afraid to use it. He threw for 2,682 yards as a redshirt freshman while displaying the leadership of a fifth-year senior.

Siran Stacy, Alabama After missing most of the '90 season with a knee injury, Stacy's Heisman campaign seriously lacks momentum. But if he's 100 percent healthy—as Tide officials claim—then Stacy has the potential to match his 1989 numbers: 1,079 yards rushing, 371 yards receiving, 18 touchdowns. —C.E.

picked them apart to end Florida's final year of NCAA probation.

Despite that loss, Steve Spurrier's first campaign as coach of the team with which he once won the Heisman Trophy was a smashing success. The Gators would have won the SEC title had they been eligible, and with Spurrier's high-octane offense in place, they'll be in the thick of the conference race this year.

Quarterback Shane Matthews surpassed several school and SEC pass-

ing records in 1990 and could emerge as a Heisman candidate in '91. While the attention is focused on the passing game, don't overlook the productive tailback-fullback duo of Errict Rhett and Dexter McNabb.

The defense features several standouts, notably free safety Will White and linebacker Tim Paulk, but the Gators can't replace first-round draft pick Huey Richardson, Gatorback Godfrey Myles and cornerback Richard Fain without slipping a bit.

23 TEXAS The Longhorns rediscovered how to win last season, saving David McWilliams' job in the process. They wiped out the sour taste of losing seasons in 1988 and '89 and made their first Cotton Bowl appearance in seven years.

They began the year with the theme "Whatever It Takes," but it wasn't discovered until after the season that "whatever it takes" included players forging steroid prescriptions for themselves.



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Crisp. Invigorating.
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It's a feeling you won't forget.

Mountain Fresh Dial

Nevertheless, there is legitimate talent at Texas—not enough to knock off Houston, but a punishing defense and a strong ground attack will keep the Longhorns in the running. Sophomore RB Butch Hadnot does a fine Earl Campbell impersonation with a football in his hands, and if QB Peter Gardere stays healthy (he suffered a minor knee injury in the spring), the 'Horns should hook themselves eight wins.

24 **BYU** "Have Ty, will travel" is the cry from Provo this year as the Cougars look to bounce back from a disastrous 1990 finish without some valuable players from last year's squad.

BYU is 0-2 since Ty Detmer won the Heisman Trophy, and the '91 season begins with games against Florida State, UCLA and Penn State. San Diego State figures to challenge the Cougars for the WAC crown, but there is one fact we cannot ignore here: LaVell Edwards, who has the third-highest winning percentage among active major-college coaches, has led BYU to 12 of the last 15 conference titles.

25 **BAYLOR** If you listen carefully to the whispers coming from coaches in the Southwest Conference, they sound like this: "Look

out for Baylor."

Baylor was the best team not to go to a bowl game last year (the Bears turned down a few offers because they thought they had a shot at the Cotton Bowl). A strong defense, the trademark of a Grant Teaff team, is led by a pair of dominating defensive ends—Santana Dotson and Robin Jones (Dotson gets all the ink, but Jones is better). The offense returned to the run-oriented veer in 1990 and should be more stable this season. FB Robert Strait is ready to blossom, and the coaches raved all spring about TB Creig Stephens, who redshirted last season.

26 **VIRGINIA TECH** Frank Beam-er has quietly done a spectacular coaching job with the Hokies, and his '91 offense features a star-studded cast. Keep an eye on QB Will Furrer, RB Vaughn Hebron, WR Marcus Mickel and OT Eugene Chung, a state champion in judo. Seven starters return to a defense that held each of its last four 1990 opponents—all bowl teams—to less than 17 points. Georgia Tech could manage only a pair of fourth-quarter field goals.

27 **STANFORD** The Cardinal team that stunned Notre Dame last year and came

within 12 seconds of knocking off Colorado enters the '91 campaign with a well-balanced offensive attack and a deep and improved defense. But the most important factor here is head coach Dennis Green. "He sold those kids on aggressive, hard-nosed football," says Colorado's Bill McCartney.

This year, Green will have to sell his kids on perseverance—Stanford's first four games are against Washington, Arizona, Colorado and Notre Dame.

28 **LSU** No national power has fallen from grace faster than LSU, but the Bayou Bengals still have enough young talent to rebound, and new head coach Curley Hallman brings renewed enthusiasm to the program. Hallman worked wonders in his three-year stint at Southern Miss. Bolstered by a good-looking defense, he'll restore the roar in Baton Rouge.

29 **VIRGINIA** The Cavaliers' improbable run at No. 1 last year proved to be just that, but George Welsh's crew still landed on solid ground. The celebrated Moores—QB Shawn and WR Herman—will be missed, but RBs Terry Kirby and Nikki Fisher along with a solid defense assure Virginia of fielding a bowl contender.

THE SPORT PRESEASON ALL-AMERICA TEAM

OFFENSE

- QB— David Klingler, Houston
RB— Glyn Milburn, Stanford
RB— Russell White, California
WR— Carl Pickens, Tennessee
WR— Desmond Howard, Michigan
TE— Derek Brown, Notre Dame
OT— Bob Whitfield, Stanford
OT— Ray Roberts, Virginia
OG— Ed Blake, Auburn
OG— Tim Simpson, Illinois
C— Jay Leeuwenburg, Colorado
PK— Jason Hanson, Washington State

DEFENSE

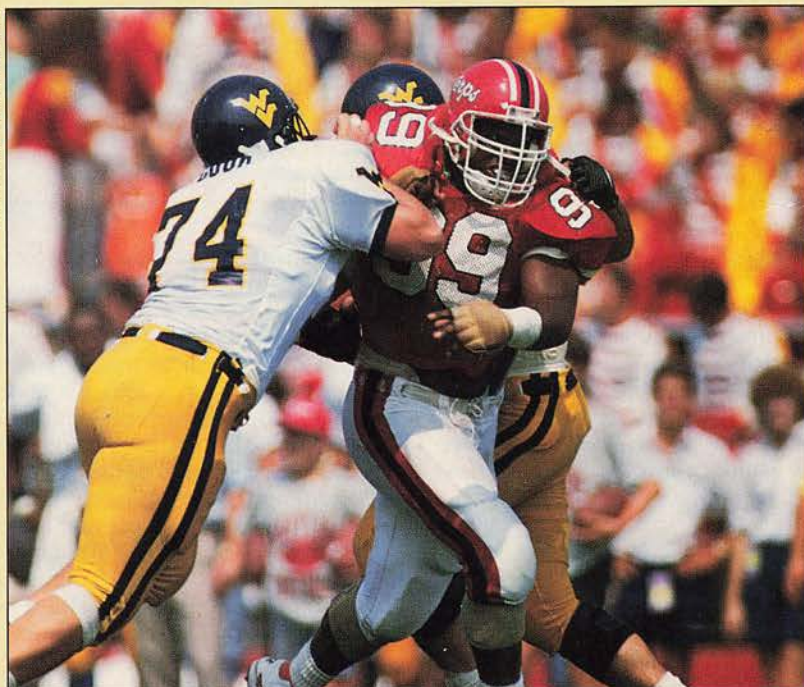
- DL— Steve Emtman, Washington
DL— Larry Webster, Maryland
DL— Alonzo Spellman, Ohio State
LB— Marco Coleman, Georgia Tech
LB— Dwight Hollier, North Carolina
LB— Robert Jones, East Carolina
LB— Levon Kirkland, Clemson
DB— Ken Swilling, Georgia Tech
DB— Terrell Buckley, Florida State
DB— Dale Carter, Tennessee
DB— Kevin Smith, Texas A&M
P— Craig Hentrich, Notre Dame

RICK STEWART/ALLSPORT USA



Stanford's Glyn Milburn

DOUG PENSINGER/ALLSPORT USA



Maryland's Larry Webster

30 **TEXAS A&M** Talk all you want about the wealth of talent that left this squad after last season, but pity the team that underestimates the Aggies in '91. Word from College Station is that RB Greg Hill will more than adequately fill the shoes of Darren Lewis, who ended his career fifth on the all-time NCAA rushing list. Losses on defense are offset by the presence of SPORT preseason All-American CB Kevin Smith.

31 **SAN DIEGO STATE** If you listen to head coach Al Luginbill, his team's near upset of Miami late last season was no fluke. Luginbill talks a good game, and he has the Aztecs on track to being perennial contenders for the WAC title. He's starting to keep San Diego's top prep standouts home for college. Cree Morris faces a tall challenge in replacing 6-8 Dan McGwire at QB, but Morris—who's 6-7—has one of the nation's best receivers,

Patrick Rowe, as a target.

32 **CALIFORNIA** With veteran QB Mike Pawlawski, second-team all-conference WR Brian Treggs and SPORT preseason All-American RB Russell White, the Bears will have no trouble scoring points. Head coach Bruce Snyder insists that the defense will be much better than the group that allowed almost 30 points a game last season. If that's the case,



Patrick Rowe's acrobatics will keep San Diego State in contention for the WAC title and a spot in the SPORT Top 40.

look out. But it won't be easy cracking the Pac-10's crowded upper echelon.

33 LOUISVILLE Howard Schnellenberger continues to break new ground in Louisville. The Cardinals posted their first-ever 10-win season in '90, but NFL-bound stars QB Browning Nagle and DL Ted Washington are just two of 12 starters who must be replaced. Schnellenberger says his '91 team will be his best in terms of overall talent, but the Cards face Tennessee, Ohio State and Florida State.

34 SOUTHERN MISS While Louisville basks in its newfound national attention, the Golden Eagles would like to remind you that they were the only team to beat the Cardinals last season—the ninth year in a row Louisville has lost to Southern Miss. With Curley Hallman's departure to LSU, new head coach Jeff Bower faces the task of replacing QB Brett Favre. The Eagles will be carried, however, by a super defense and all-purpose threat Tony Smith at tailback.

35 FRESNO STATE This is the obligatory spot where we pencil in the Big West Conference champ, and you can expect Fresno

State to reclaim the crown it lost to San Jose State last year. The Bulldogs had posted back-to-back titles before that, and head coach Jim Sweeney does nothing but win (he's 55-12-2 the last six years). Standouts such as QB Mark Barsotti, WR Kelvin Means and FS Marquez Pope will help this team cruise to nine wins.

36 OREGON The Bill Musgrave Era is over, but there's no need to panic. Musgrave's replacement at QB is not set—although redshirt freshman Danny O'Neil had an edge after spring drills—but the Ducks will be on solid ground thanks to a strong defense. The front line of Matt LaBounty, Marcus Woods and Jeff Cummins will put a hurting on opposing quarterbacks.

37 NORTH CAROLINA In 1990, the Tar Heels tripled their win total of the previous two years combined. That was only the beginning of a methodical rebuilding program under coach Mack Brown, and the improvement will continue. Keep an eye on bruising RB Natrone Means, who means business. Don't forget the defense, which was the best linebacking corps in the nation; the leader is

SPORT's top-rated LB, Dwight Hollier.

38 MISSISSIPPI The Rebels will be nowhere near as talented as the bunch that reeled off nine wins last season, but Billy Brewer is too good a coach—and the schedule is too easy—for Ole Miss to win less than seven games. The key is finding a running back to go with the capable QB tandem of Tom Luke and Russ Shows.

39 PITTSBURGH The Panthers are still a mystery. They've got as much potential as any team in the nation, but it's been years since they've played up to that level. On paper, this team has all-star talent at quarterback (Alex Van Pelt), receiver (Olanda Truitt), offensive line, defensive line and linebacker. But the same talent produced only three wins last year.

40 N.C. STATE There are perhaps a few teams more deserving of squeezing into our Top 40, but we defer to Dick Sheridan, as good a coach as there is in college football. Five of his defensive starters from a year ago were NFL draft picks, and he's got an uphill climb in the improved ACC, but Sheridan will keep the Wolfpack afloat. ★

THE DEATH OF A SEASON

PHIL SIMMS SHOULD HAVE BEEN LEADING THE GIANTS TO A SUPER BOWL VICTORY. INSTEAD, HE WATCHED JEFF HOSTETLER DO IT/By Barry Meisel

Her husband's team had won the Super Bowl six days earlier in Tampa without him, so the injured quarterback's wife thought they would be safe at a Wayne, New Jersey, movie theater.

The cumbersome cast had been removed from his severely sprained right foot eight days earlier, but she wasn't worried about his physical comfort. Diana Simms worried that her husband's peace of mind would be shattered by a city that never sleeps and rarely weeps.

Phil Simms—the best and most successful quarterback New York has seen since Joe Namath—didn't need to hear any verbal garbage from the denizens of a town that considers itself sports-sophisticated but still hasn't given him the respect he deserves.

He especially didn't need to hear it so soon after a championship in which he felt he took no part. But less than a week after the New York Giants nipped the Buffalo Bills, 20-19, in Super Bowl XXV behind Simms' understudy, Jeff Hostetler, that's exactly what Simms got. As he and his wife walked from the parking lot to the theater, a car slowed. Two teen-aged boys rolled down the windows on this chilly February evening and began a cruel, rhythmic chant: "Hoss-tetler...Hoss-tetler...Hoss-tetler...Hoss-tetler...." Then they quickly drove away.

Diana Simms remembers saying to herself, "My God. Do I want to hear this crap now?"

They walked silently into the theater to watch "Not Without My Daughter." But Diana coaxed Phil into leaving before the film ended because she wanted to avoid more trouble. After they climbed into their copper-colored Jaguar, she turned to him and apologized.

"I don't know why," Diana says. "I guess because I had pushed him to go out. We go out, but I'm careful where we go. I don't ever put him in a big restaurant. I always pick something really small, where I know the people. I kind of go by the class of people. Isn't that awful to say? But I do. I wouldn't go to any local hamburger place. We always hear a little something here and there, but that wasn't the weekend to hear that. It made me nervous because I didn't know if he was going to react to them, because he's a little upset about the whole thing."

The "whole thing," of course, was the 1990 season. The Giants started 10-0 with an overpowering defense and a low-risk, high-percentage, ball-control offense under the virtually flawless direction of their 35-year-old quarterback, who, for the first time in his career, finished a season as the NFC's highest-rated passer.

After winning the first 10 games, the Giants lost the next two, then won their 11th to clinch first place in the NFC East for the second straight year. But in the 14th game of Simms' 12th NFL year, early in the third quarter of a 17-13 loss to the Bills at Giants Stadium, his right foot gave out on the wet turf as he planted to throw.

The Giants simply insisted some ligaments were sprained. They counted him out for four to six weeks and raised a glimmer of hope that he'd be back deep into the playoff season.

Simms knew better.

"When I walked off the field, I knew I was done for the year," he says. "I'm not an idiot. After all these years, I know a little something about my anatomy. The foot doesn't heal real fast."

The Giants finished 13-3 and earned a first-round playoff bye. Hostetler, a backup since 1984, whipped the Bears, 31-3, helped orchestrate a 15-13 upset of the



"When I
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Simms was
denied last
January the
chance to
repeat his MVP
performance of
Super Bowl XXI

49ers in the NFC Championship Game at San Francisco and completed the fairy tale in Tampa.

Simms, meanwhile, stayed away. He took his daily treatments at Giants Stadium, but he kept his deep disappointment hidden by avoiding the press whenever he could and mumbling innocuously whenever he was cornered. He avoided most team meetings and functions, which displeased a few people in the organization. He stood on the sidelines for the NFC Championship and the Super Bowl, but he hung out in relative obscurity with the other injured players.

Simms gave Hostetler the space he remembered himself needing in the years before he grew secure with blunt head coach Bill Parcells.

"People wrote and took for granted that I must be bitter," Simms says. "I wasn't. I didn't want sympathy. I didn't want 'Poor Phil.' To heck with 'Poor Phil.' Bill said after I first got hurt that I should still go to meetings. I did for a while. Finally, I looked at it from my standpoint. All it did was make me a little more depressed."

What about helping Hostetler?

"That's a myth," Simms says. "There was nothing I could have added that he didn't know. Another cliché is standing on the sidelines and helping the next guy. A quarterback, the less thoughts he has from other guys, the better. I'm sure somebody was ticked off that I wasn't around. That's OK."

Simms flew back to New Jersey rather than accompany the Giants on their wild charter flight from San Francisco to Tampa a week before the Super Bowl. He flew to Florida three days before the game. He grudgingly met a dozen writers a few days before the game. He admitted to feeling as if one of the best years of his career had never happened and insisted he wanted Hostetler and his team to do well. Simms warmed only when he was asked about Super Bowl XXI.

"Being here brings back memories," Simms said with a smile of his greatest day as a pro. But a week after Hostetler's greatest day as a pro, here were two Giants fans treating Simms as if he were a leper: "Hoss-tetler...Hoss-tetler...Hoss-tetler."

"It was a punk kid," Simms says, qui-

etly, trying to explain away what he has learned to endure. "Two punks."

The problem is tens of thousands of these vocal punks have invaded Giants Stadium since 1979, the year the Giants used their first-round pick to draft a little-known, blond-haired quarterback from a little-known college in Kentucky named Morehead State. Never mind that Simms has attempted and completed more passes, for more yards and touchdowns, than any quarterback in the Giants' 66-year history. Never mind that he was named the MVP of Super Bowl XXI for completing a Super Bowl-record 22 of 25 passes in the Giants' 39-20

"I understand the realities of the sport. I know how the fan is. I'm a fan."

et over his head, and buried his face in his hands.

"I just sat there thinking, 'Wow. This is unbelievable to be sitting here so late in the year. I'm tired as hell. It's been a long season. And for what? To watch the team going to the playoffs, and I'll be sitting at home.'"

No successful athlete who has given to his city as much as Simms has deserves what Simms has endured. Autographs at a restaurant while he's eating? That comes with the job, mister. But the cruelty of two delinquents cruising on a Saturday night? That does not. Nothing says a city has to adopt any of its sports stars. But what did Simms ever do to incur this treatment?

His career check list satisfies Gotham's two bottom lines: One, he won. Two, he refused to quit when he got hurt in '81 (separated shoulder), in '82 (torn knee ligaments) and in '83 (dislocated thumb). He hung tough when he got the hell kicked out of him behind a porous offensive line. He showed a blue-collar grit that New York

loves most of all.

"New York people loved me because I was tough," says McConkey, who lives in Manhattan. "And Phil's tougher than anybody. I always said, for this area, it was more important to be tough than talented. I don't know what it is. It's mind-boggling."

Simms was born on a farm in Springfield, Kentucky, the fifth of Barbara and



Hostetler and time may be tearing at his sleeve, but Simms isn't the kind of guy who'll develop a bad attitude.

route of the Denver Broncos, the franchise's first NFL title in 30 years. Never mind that he's come back from devastating injuries in 1981, '82 and '83 to lead the Giants into the playoffs in '84, '85, '86 and '89. Never mind that he quarterbacked the team through most of last year's championship season.

Never mind all that. When Hostetler replaced Simms for the season against



**WE DON'T
KNOW B.O.**

Walter Simms' nine kids. This lower-middle-class family moved to Louisville when Phil was 6. Simms married New Jersey native Diana Fronfield after his rookie year. These days, she's more quotable than he is. He's well-mannered, preppy-looking and non-controversial. His 10-year-old son Christopher is polite. His 6-year-old daughter Deirdre is precocious. His 2-year-old son Matthew is adorable.

"He's a family man," says David Fishof, Simms' New York-based agent. "He doesn't hang out in night spots. He doesn't get his name on Page Six. He doesn't get his name on the People Page. Sure, it's something I've been frustrated with. But I respect him. He doesn't have wife problems like other players do. He's careful where he's seen. Of all my clients, he's the only one who doesn't need a shrink. He's got his head on as straight as anybody I know."

Is that it? Is Simms too clean for New

**"I don't want
to sit on the
bench, but if
I do, I'll
survive. I
won't cause
trouble."**

York?

"Keith Hernandez they love," Fishof says. "Why? Because he [was] out with a different broad every night. I mean, Joe Namath. Look at New York people and who they like. Phil represents family. I always tease him, 'Let's go out to a different place, to parties.' He just doesn't go. He'd rather go speak to IBM."

He has intense pride. Growing up in a sports-minded family with brothers one and two years apart, he has a thirst for competition, which is why he says he's not satisfied with his career. He's a fitness fanatic who's usually the last Giant out of the team's weight room. He wants to play as long as his 6-foot-3, 215-pound body will allow. He wanted to orchestrate that second Super Bowl triumph and win a second MVP trophy, something only Joe Montana, Terry Bradshaw and Bart Starr have done.

A dozen years into a career that has made him rich and famous, you don't have to push Simms to discuss his ambivalent relationship with New York. But it's the one subject about which he won't be brutally frank.

"I have theories," he says. "But they'll remain with me. Most are not very nice."

He won't come out and say it in juicy slang for the headline writers, but the venom spewed by the two-faced snakes in the stands who boo him between TD passes has cut deeply into the joy he will carry out of his professional career.

"To sit here and tell you anything else, I'd be lying," he says. "I just accept it and go on. I understand the realities of the sport. I know how the fan is. I'm a fan. I'm just not one of those fans who's going to be in a bad mood if my team lost last weekend."

"I see a lot of good things in watching players. I love watching basketball. If a guy scores 42 points and misses the last shot, I'm not the kind of fan who says, 'Ooooh, he choked.' I'm more the type of fan who appreciates the performances. But then again, I'm prejudiced."

Phil Simms entered training camp locked into the fight of his NFL life. By leading the Giants to five wins in the last five games of their 1990 season (including the playoffs), Hostetler had earned the right to compete with Simms for the starting job. Simms

doesn't see it becoming a—tabloid headline, please—"Quarterback Controversy."

"I don't know what it's going to be like," he says. "My answer is, I don't care what it's like. I'll try to make the best of it. It's a tough situation for me. We all know that."

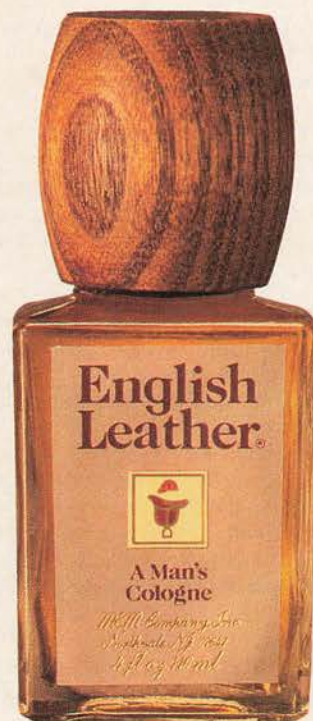
Of course, he wants to start. His pride and confidence make him loath to accept anything less. He won't say that, of course. He will say that he doesn't mind competing for the job, that he believes it will be handled properly, and that he hopes it won't undermine the Giants' quest to defend their title.

"These things need to be decided quickly, cleanly," he says of a battle he doesn't want dragging through the pre-season. "Get it done. A quarterback needs time to prepare for the season. They have to make it a nonissue. I truly believe it will be handled early in training camp, if not before."

And if he loses the starting job as he did to Scott Brunner in '83 before Brunner got yanked?

"I don't want to sit on the bench, but if I do, I'll survive," he says. "I won't cause trouble. Whatever happens, I'm a company man."★

Barry Meisel is a sportswriter for the *New York Daily News*.



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PERFORMANCE**

WARREN MOON

**"WE'VE BEEN IN THE
PLAYOFFS FOUR
TIMES. NOW IT'S A
MATTER OF WINNING
THE BIG ONE."**



After Houston Oilers quarterback Warren Moon blistered Kansas City for 527 yards and three touchdowns last December 16, aston-

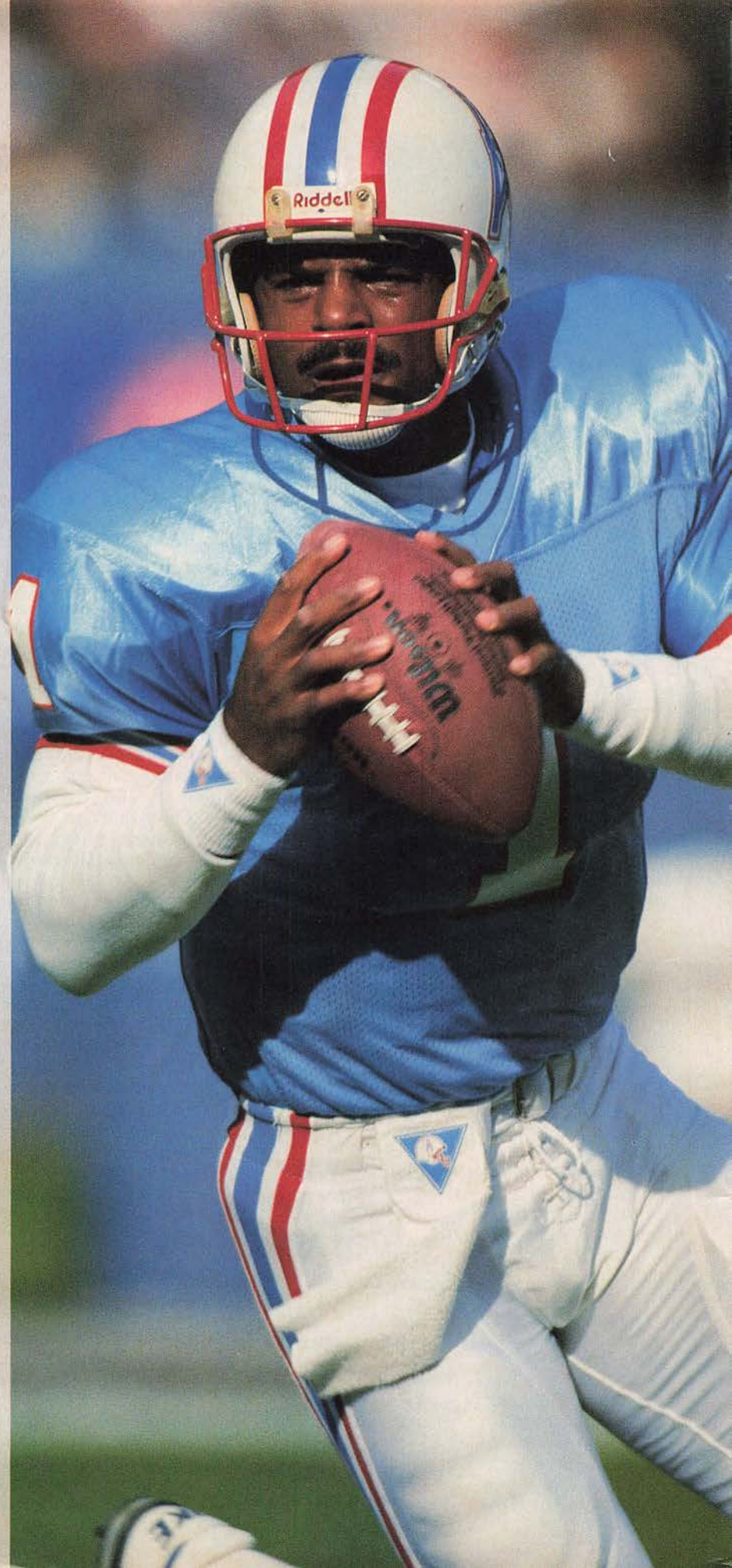
ished Chiefs linebacker Derrick Thomas ran out of adjectives.

"It was one of the most unbelievable, incredible, awesome displays any quarterback ever put on," he said. "Warren is the best quarterback I've ever seen."

When Moon's season ended with 4,689 yards and 33 touchdowns, a lot of other people agreed. Moon has had up and down years, but he has maintained one constant throughout his career: He produces.

In 1978, he took the Washington Huskies to the Rose Bowl and was selected the game's MVP. Spurned by the NFL, he took his game to Canada, where he won five consecutive Canadian Football League titles. In 1983, he established a CFL record for the most passing yards in a single season with 5,648. He finished his six-year stint in Canada with 21,228 passing yards.

Still, his detractors doubted his ability to get it done in the NFL. But once he joined the Oilers in 1984, he silenced the critics. It's not just his individual stats that impress. Moon is a winner; he's guided the Oilers to the playoffs in



each of the last four years.

"God gave Warren a lot of gifts, including great athleticism and intelligence," says Houston offensive coordinator Kevin Gilbride. "But what impresses me the most about him is that he's still as hungry to learn and improve as he was when he came into the league."

In addition to being a quarterback in high demand, he's also an extremely successful businessman, a gracious philanthropist and a family man. He has accepted the crush of fame with humility and respect. He is, in a word, accountable; he's accountable to his wife and family, accountable to his community, accountable to the fans, coaches and management of the Oilers.

SPORT: You had the chance to break the NFL record for most passing yards in a game. Yet in the final moments of the game against the Chiefs, you elected to call successive running plays. Why?

MOON: I wasn't going to throw the ball just to get the record. Records aren't that important. The key is to win. Somebody said we were close to the record, but at the time, I wasn't thinking about records. We were winning, and the game was pretty much decided. It would have been selfish to keep firing away, and it would have been disrespectful to Kansas City.

SPORT: Chiefs coach Marty Schottenheimer said later, "I would've bet my house that Warren Moon wouldn't throw for 500 yards against our defense." Did you have any idea going in that you had the chance for such phenomenal numbers?

MOON: I think that's just the nature of our offense. If you line up in the wrong

"I wasn't going to throw the ball to get the record. Records aren't that important. The key is to win."

formation or if you get caught in a mismatch, our offense is designed to find that weakness and exploit it. It was just a combination of us being in the right situations against the right formations. Kansas City tried to play a lot of man-to-man, and they didn't have enough help. Our receivers made some outstanding plays.

SPORT: There was much publicity over

the fact that your former coach, Jerry Glanville, never mentioned your name in his 1990 book, "Elvis Don't Like Football." What was the problem between you and Glanville?

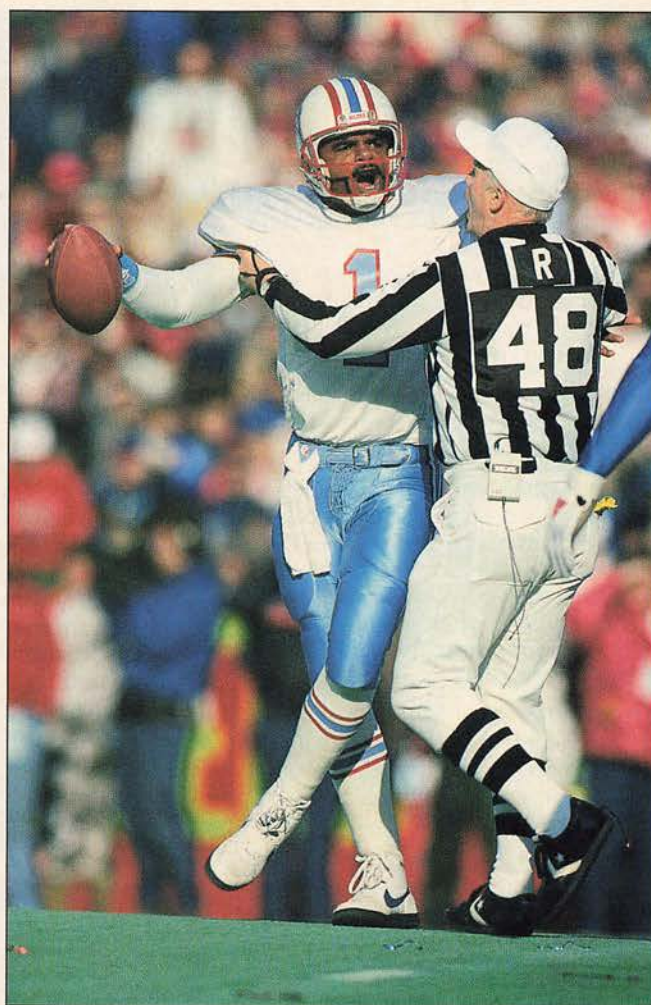
MOON: It's funny because I don't recall ever having anything bad to say about Jerry. And I don't ever recall him saying anything bad to me. I really don't understand it myself.

SPORT: The Cincinnati Bengals tweaked the tempers of the Oilers two years ago by running up a 61-7 score. You had a chance for revenge last year, when you won, 48-17. But you and the Oilers elected not to run up the score worse than it was. Again, what was your reasoning?

MOON: We had the chance to rub it in, but that's not necessary. Personally, I never entered that game with the idea of blowing them out. We're all professionals here. And remember, we play Cincinnati twice a year. I have a lot of respect for [Cincinnati's] players. I remember two years ago, when they beat us, 61-7, Boomer [Esiason] apologized after the game. Many of their players were embarrassed, and many of our players were embarrassed. But sometimes in this sport, things get out of hand, and what's done is done. For me to purposely try to embarrass them would have been immature, in my opinion.

SPORT: You were injured late last season. Cody Carlson filled in capably, but a lot of people believe things would have been different had you played. You couldn't have enjoyed watching your team lose in the playoffs.

MOON: We've been in the playoffs four times. Now it's a matter of winning the big one. I think that's where the great quarterbacks are judged—by getting to championship games and winning



MITCHELL B. REBEL

them. We still have that ahead of us. But I thought Cody did an outstanding job, especially against Pittsburgh [the win that clinched a playoff berth for Houston]. To say whether I would have done anything differently is pure speculation. Every situation is different, and you can't compare what Cody did [in the playoff loss at Cincinnati] to what I might have done. I've been in very similar situations, where things just don't happen for you. But the best thing about the NFL is you usually get another chance. You have to prove it every week.

SPORT: You always seem in control, almost unemotional, regardless of the situation. Have you ever lost your poise?

MOON: In Kansas City two years ago, I felt I was roughed up by Derrick Thomas, and I retaliated. It was very uncharacteristic of me, but I was very frustrated because of the game situation [Houston was being blown out, 34-0]. I was very embarrassed and vowed that would never happen again. The next series of downs, Derrick and I shook hands and apologized to each other.

SPORT: Two years ago, you signed one of the richest contracts in the league—

\$10 million for five years. With exorbitant contracts, inevitably, comes exorbitant pressure. How do you accept the constant pressure and scrutiny?

MOON: I don't think it's unfair for people to expect a lot from me, because I expect a lot from myself. I'm my own worst critic, and I'm harder on myself than anyone else could be. I'm a perfectionist, and rarely am I totally satisfied with my performance. So criticism from others, particularly those outside the game, doesn't bother me.

SPORT: How do you motivate yourself? Do your goals change from year to year?

MOON: Consistency, I think, is the key to being a solid, respected NFL quarterback. That's my goal every year—to be consistent and improve every week. I know my receivers now, and they know me. Everybody on this offense has a good feel for each other, and that's making everybody's job easier.

SPORT: How difficult is the run 'n' shoot to master? Do you agree with Bill Walsh's criticisms that the offense makes it difficult to score inside the 20s and in bad weather?

MOON: The biggest thing last year was getting everybody on the same page. As we settled into the season, we got more aggressive, more explosive, more innovative. And almost every time we didn't score, it wasn't really the offense; it was human error, execution. A dropped pass, a fumble, an interception. [In regard to the weather] ... as I recall, it was pretty cold in Kansas City, wasn't it?

SPORT: Black quarterbacks were often asked to switch to other positions in college, a stereotype-induced trend that you never gave in to. Do you feel you have opened doors for more black quarterbacks?

MOON: I never changed positions, because I didn't ever believe I was fast enough to play wide receiver or defensive back. In the beginning, I didn't set out to be a pioneer or anything. I just thought my best chance to make it was at quarterback. And looking back, I'm glad I made the decisions I did.

SPORT: Most people with your money would spend their off-seasons on a boat or tropical island. You, however, spend most of your time raising money for your foundation [the Houston-based Crescent Moon Foundation, which helps raise money for local-area charities]. Why does giving mean so much to you?

MOON: I don't think my calling is just to be a great football player, to just throw

"I don't think my calling is just to be a great football player, to just throw touchdowns. It goes deeper than that."

touchdowns. It goes deeper than that. That's why I'm involved in so many off-the-field projects. In recent years, numerous community programs and projects have been cut out, programs that keep kids out of trouble. There has to be more private involvement to keep programs like that going. And I don't want my kids to forget where they came from, either. Humility is important in our family. The bottom line is we're all people. We weren't born with all this luxury. I've been fortunate, but I can't play football forever. When football is over, you are left with who you really are. What I want to be remembered for, more than anything, is that I did truly care about other people. I did my best to make things a little better for people who haven't been

as fortunate as I have been.

SPORT: With all of the responsibilities you have to the Oilers, to the community, to the foundation, does it ever get difficult to make time for your family?

MOON: My wife and I have had discussions about that before. Yes, she'd like me to be at home more. But you have to sacrifice to get things done. They probably see me more during the season than after the season.... The hardest thing, I guess, is it's difficult to relax in public. You hate to brush people off or be rude to anybody. Then sometimes it feels like it takes forever to shake everybody's hand or sign autographs for everybody who asks. But there is a responsibility that comes with success. Kids look up to sports figures. I don't think it's asking too much of a player to just do the right things.

SPORT: Why did you pick "Crescent Moon" as the name of your civic foundation?

MOON (Smiling): The moon is in the crescent phase in the first and fourth quarters. As a quarterback, you better be good not only at the beginning but at the end. That's when it counts. ★



BRYAN YABLONSKY

FALL FRENZY

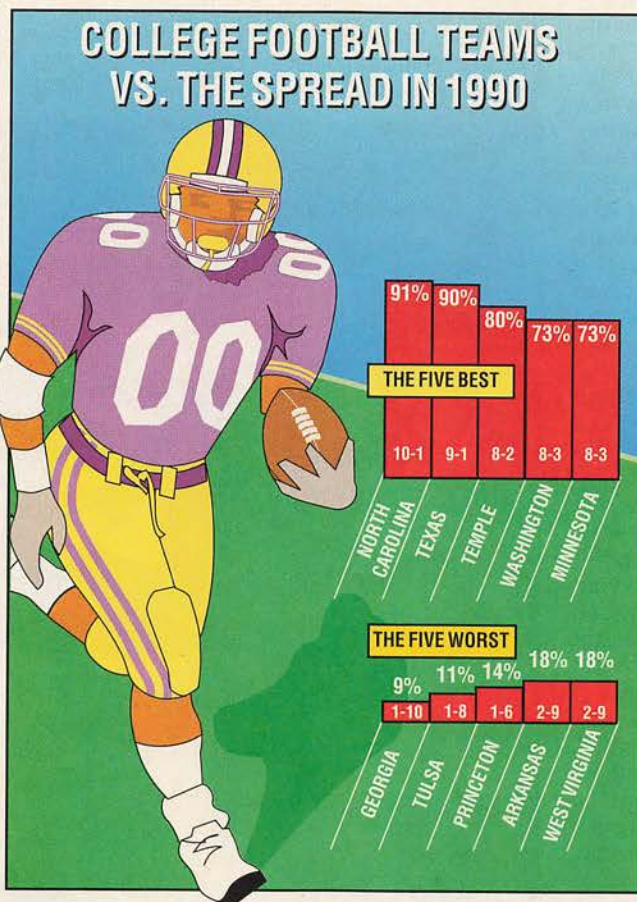
HERE ARE THE TRENDS THAT CAN MAKE YOU A WINNER THIS COLLEGE FOOTBALL SEASON/By Danny Sheridan

With the 1991 college football season approaching, hail the return of your trusted pigskin prophet, who's arrived with a season's worth of trends, tips and tendencies. More so than with any other sport, handicapping college football involves the art of the probable—what happens one season usually happens the next. As always, we make our money by playing the trends. So here are several patterns to trust in this year.

POWER PLAYS: I told you last September that you wouldn't find a better underdog play than my alma mater, Alabama. Last October 20, the Crimson Tide were 11-point dogs to host Tennessee. Alabama won outright, 9-6, lifting their success rate as underdogs to a stunning 87 percent (13-2) over the last 18 years. Two or three years constitutes a trend; 18 is a tradition. When Vegas gives you points with 'Bama on the road, pounce on it.

I also singled out Michigan as a live underdog bet. The Wolverines were underdogs only once last season—six points to Notre Dame in their season opener. Six points and Michigan! Point me to the cashier's window. Michigan lost by only four, 28-24, bringing its record as an underdog to 15-4 over the last 16 years.

EAST IS EDEN: For the sharp bettor it is. In recent



years, betting against Eastern independents at home has been a consistent money maker. For starters, West Virginia couldn't cover a bedspread at home—0-7 last year and 2-11 over the past two years. Equally dismal are the Pitt Panthers. I warned you last year that Pitt was a treacherous home favorite. The Panthers went 2-4 vs. the spread as host favorites in 1990, dropping their success rate to a pitiful 39 percent over the last nine

seasons. Penn State and Boston College each present specific betting opportunities. Bet with the opposition whenever the Nittany Lions are home favorites and the Eagles are home underdogs. Penn State checks in with a 5-15 record vs. the spread as home favorites over the past 3½ years. The Eagles went 2-10 against the points as home underdogs the last 2½ seasons, including last year's 0-3 mark. Appropriately, on BC's home-

coming, Syracuse, a nine-point favorite, whipped the Eagles, 35-6.

ROCKIN' ROADERS: The Florida Gators are the best road show since Hope and Crosby. Florida's away record against the spread is a superb 32-13-2 since 1980. Iowa State is a school that the public doesn't know, or care, much about. But you should, considering the Cyclones have performed at about a 70-percent clip (13-6-1) against the spread on the road the past four years. Rutgers also deserves some backing, specifically when given points on the road. The Scarlet Knights are 18-11 vs. the spread as visiting dogs over the last six seasons.

HOMEBOS: BYU is close to a cinch in Provo, having gone 16-4 against the line there over the past 3½ seasons. Notre Dame is almost as dependable. The Fighting Irish have covered in 71 percent of their home games since 1985. Florida is as solid at home as it is on the road. Over the last four years, the Gators are 15-6 against the points beneath that bettor-friendly Gainesville sun. And, fittingly, no team defends its turf as well as Army. Over the last 8½ years, the Cadets are a near-perfect 13-1 vs. the spread as home underdogs.

WAC-KED OUT: That ring you hear this fall should be coming from the cash register after you bet *against* Wyoming, San Diego State and Air Force on the road. These three WAC schools

TRACY CALVERT-JANTZ

SPORT ODDS

have little success away from home. Wyoming is 2-11 vs. the spread on the road the past 2½ years, San Diego State is 6-16 over the last 4½ seasons, and Air Force is only 11-26 the last six years.

STREAKERS: A characteristic unique to college football is that a team's performance against the point spread usually runs in streaks. With more than 100 schools playing division I-A football, the recreational bettor has difficulty staying current on each team and tends to bet according to a judgment made two or three years ago, even if a team has since made a significant change in its playing level. This leads to the "streak" phenomenon. A team's success rate against the spread will remain relatively constant for a few seasons before the public realizes its error. Remember that the point spread reflects the *public's* estimation of a team's ability, not the oddsmaker's opinion and not the team's *actual* ability. The secret is to find a school in the midst of a streak and lock on till the public—and then the oddsmakers—catches up.

For instance, two years ago, North Carolina had a dreadful 1-10 record straight up and was 3-6-1 vs. the spread. Last season, the Tar Heels improved to 6-4-1 straight up and a remarkable 10-1 vs. the points. It's likely that the public, still stuck on that ugly 1-10 mark in '89, got walloped last year betting against North Carolina. You can trust that Vegas will keep the spread in step with the public's outdated view of UNC's ability. The Tar Heels may not cover 91 percent of the time this year, but they should continue to provide a steady profit until bettors discover them and force the oddsmakers to adjust the line. In college football, that can take a couple seasons. So, in the meantime, ride the Tar Heels.

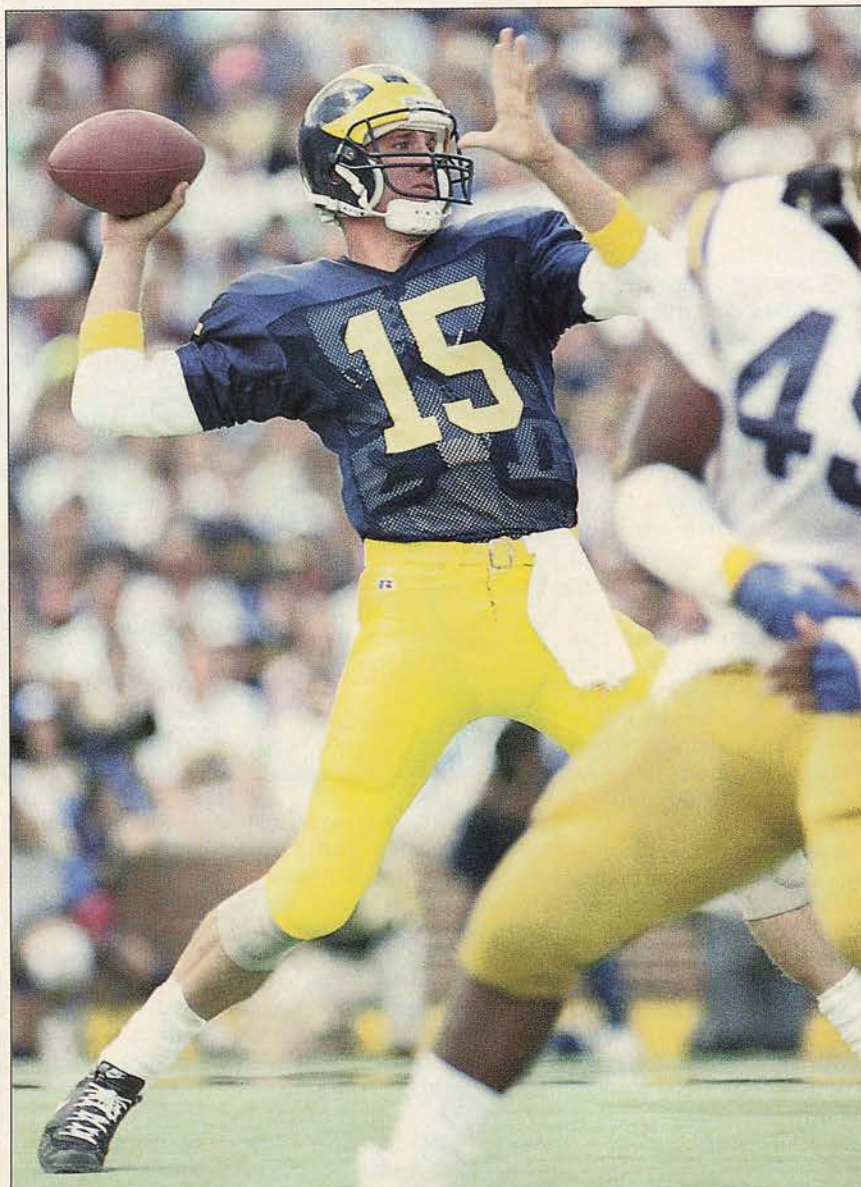
Temple, like North Carolina, fits the profile of a streaker. In 1989, the Owls went 1-10 straight up and 4-7 vs. the points. Last season, they made the nation's best straight-up turnaround, finishing 7-4. Their record against the spread jumped to 8-2. The leap from 4-7 to 8-2 against the points indicates the public's ignorance of Temple's drastic improvement. The Owls should be a solid play again this season, as the betting public still regards them as a basketball school and has little respect for their football team.

The streak trend also works in reverse. Find a team that has been a sap recently vs. the spread and put your

money down against it. West Virginia finished 3-8 against the spread last season and 4-7 vs. the number two seasons ago. Perhaps the public still thinks it's getting West Virginia of '88, the team Major Harris led to a national championship bid. The fastest way to the poorhouse is through obsolete information. Major Harris jumped to Canada, and the Mountaineers sank to 4-7 straight up last year. The public should soon catch on, but I'm confident there's one good year left betting against West Virginia.

I leave you with one final nugget of profitable information. Last season, the five best records against the spread belonged to North Carolina (10-1), Texas

(9-1), Temple (8-2), Washington (8-3) and Minnesota (8-3). These five clubs finished a combined 43-10 against the points. Straight up, they weren't far behind—a combined 38-16-1. The five worst bets were Georgia (1-10), Tulsa (1-8), Princeton (1-6; three games had no line), West Virginia (2-9) and Arkansas (2-9). Their straight-up records were about as bleak—a combined 17-37. So what, you ask? This is what: In general, good teams cover; bad teams don't. A dependable trend such as this, so simple that it may be missed, is invaluable and can mean the difference between winning and losing.★



Whenever Elvis Grbac and Michigan are underdogs, take the points and the Wolverines.

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AIR DEFENSES

Who can shut down Michael? No one. Here are Jordan's scoring averages per game and per 48 minutes against each NBA club in the '90-'91 season. (Don't be fooled, Clippers and Timberwolves fans. It's not likely that MJ penciled in "big game" on his calendar on the nights he faced your teams.)

CHARTS BY: TRACY CALVERT-JANTZ

	POINTS PER GAME	POINTS PER 48 MINUTES
Boston Celtics	37.5	43.6
San Antonio Spurs	37.5	48.0
Orlando Magic	36.5	44.4
New Jersey Nets	36.0	48.7
Milwaukee Bucks	36.0	43.0
Denver Nuggets	34.5	48.0
Philadelphia 76ers	33.8	39.8
Houston Rockets	33.0	45.3
Utah Jazz	33.0	41.1
Charlotte Hornets	32.0	40.9
Seattle SuperSonics	32.0	48.0
Portland Trail Blazers	32.0	37.9
Miami Heat	32.0	43.0
Detroit Pistons	31.6	39.1
Cleveland Cavaliers	31.0	43.8
New York Knicks	31.0	40.5
Indiana Pacers	31.0	40.0
Phoenix Suns	30.5	39.0
Dallas Mavericks	30.0	39.5
Sacramento Kings	29.0	45.6
Golden State Warriors	28.0	37.3
Washington Bullets	28.0	36.8
Atlanta Hawks	28.0	37.3
Los Angeles Lakers	28.0	32.0
Minnesota Timberwolves	18.5	26.1
Los Angeles Clippers	17.0	26.8

—Jeff Weinstock

COMPILED BY JEFF WEINSTOCK AND BILL LADSON

FOOTBALL FACTORIES

Which colleges have the most NFL players at each position?
Here's a look, based on final 1990 rosters.

QUARTERBACKS
5—Washington; 4—Miami;
3—BYU, Purdue, Illinois,
Maryland, UCLA, USC,
Notre Dame



OFFENSIVE LINEMEN
11—USC; 10—Penn State,
Pitt; 9—Notre Dame,
Iowa



RUNNING BACKS
6—Miami; 5—Florida,
Nebraska, Georgia,
Texas A&M



DEFENSIVE LINEMEN
10—Miami, Pitt; 9—Auburn;
7—Notre Dame; 6—LSU,
Texas A&M



WIDE RECEIVERS
6—Miami; 5—UCLA,
Syracuse, Tennessee



LINEBACKERS
10—USC; 6—Cal, Michigan
State, Alabama,
Minnesota



TIGHT ENDS
4—USC,
Maryland



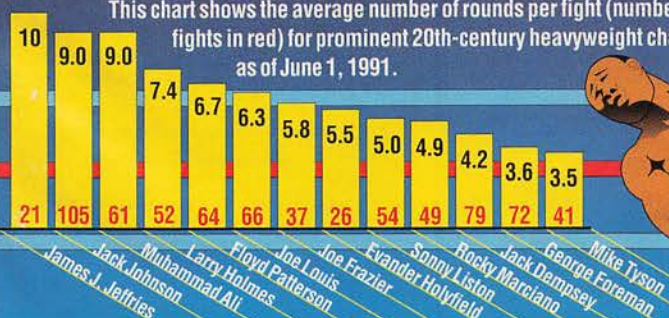
DEFENSIVE BACKS
9—Washington; 8—Baylor;
6—Notre Dame, UCLA



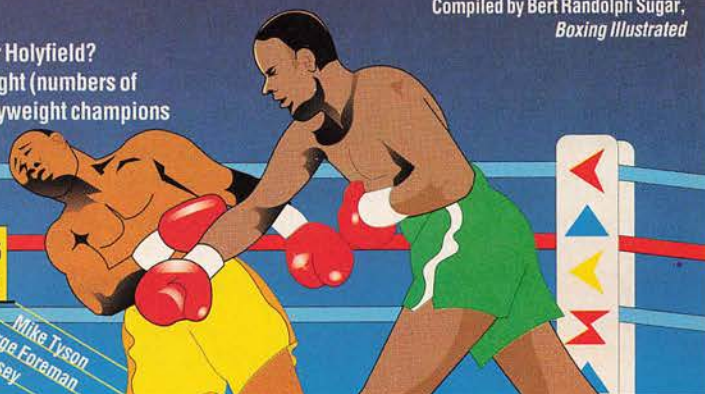
STAYING POWER

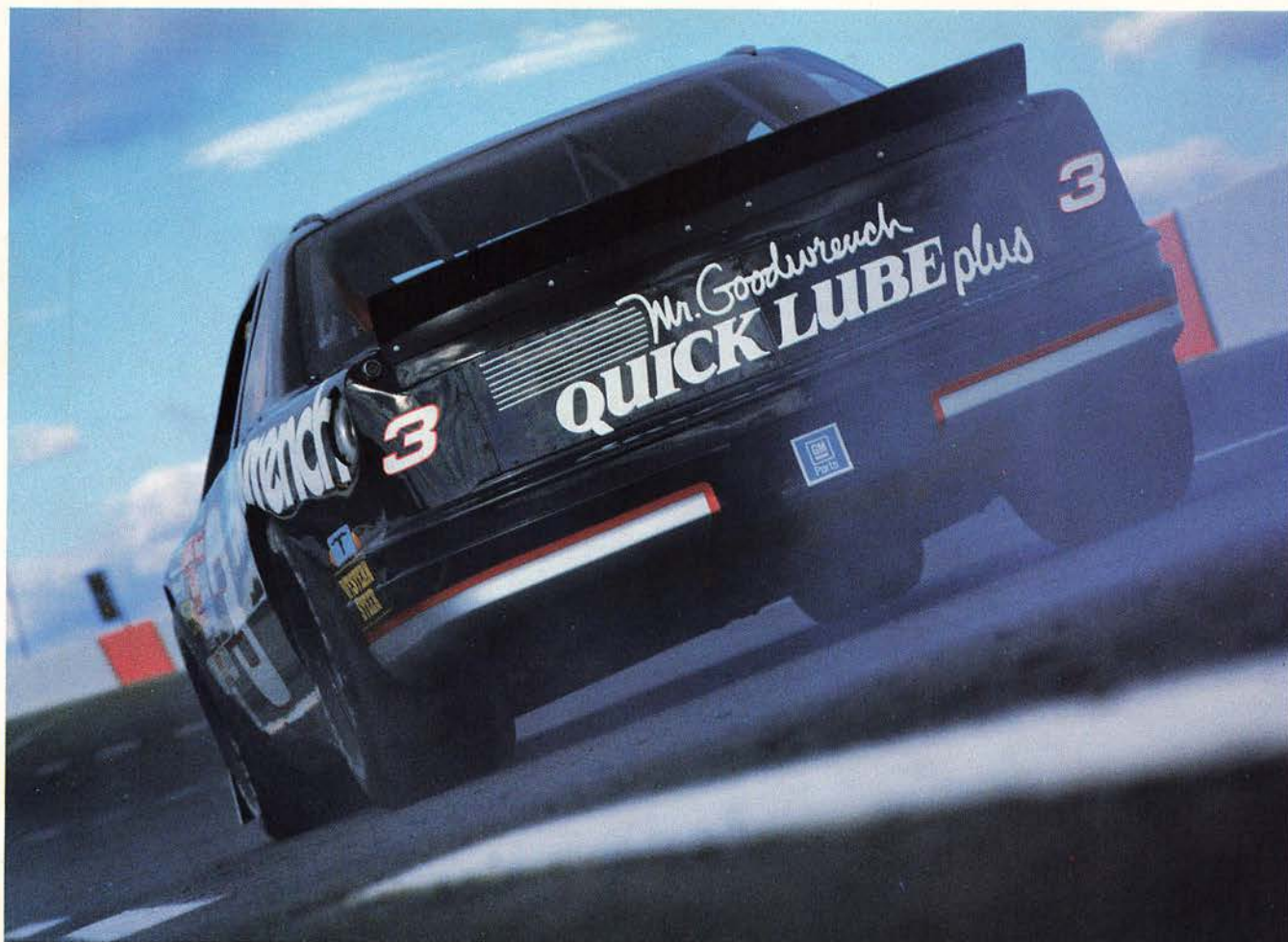
Was it easier to hang in there vs. Joe Louis than it is vs. Evander Holyfield?

This chart shows the average number of rounds per fight (numbers of fights in red) for prominent 20th-century heavyweight champions as of June 1, 1991.



Compiled by Bert Randolph Sugar,
Boxing Illustrated





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